



AmigaWorld is BACK! Well, Sort of—Page 26.

# Amazing / AMIGA

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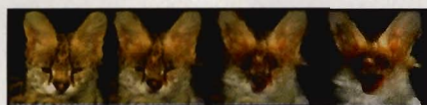
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## 9 New Products

### & other neat stuff

A Sweden Amiga Show, Draw Studio CD, four new CDs from Schartztruhe, Real 3D version 3.5 adds a host of new possibilities, and more.

## 14 Morphimals

by R. Shamms Mortier

Basic Morphing is not as hard as it once was, if you follow a few simple Rules of the Game.

## 20 Tips for Animators: Part 1

by R. Shamms Mortier

A few tricks to keep your animations interesting whether they are for your computer buddies, a tape presentation, or to dazzle viewers on the Web.

## 26 On Line

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AmigaWorld is back!!! Well, sort of. Also, learn the latest on MiniMail, MUI (version 3.7), and Voyager NG.

## 30 ATAPI CD-ROM on the A1200/A4000 Part 2

by Dave Matthews

Both AsimCDFS by Asimware Innovations Inc and AtapiPnP (Atapi Plug and Play) by CD++ will get you spinning with CD-ROMs.

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### Creating Stepped Type

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This desktop publishing article provides tips for creating stepped type effects using either Art Expression or Pagestream 3.

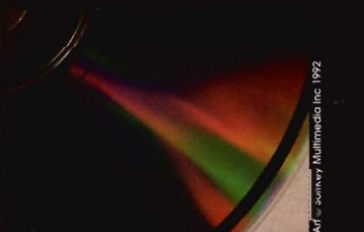


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### Success Secrets!

by Steve Yankee

Whether you are a video producer in need of marketing or just someone who needs to promote their best efforts, Steve Yankee has some valuable insights into what we all need to do.



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Art © SoftKey Multimedia Inc 1992

## 48 This Old WorkBench Special Edition Alternative Views

by Dave Matthews

Dave Matthews has received a great deal of mail concerning his suggestions on the next Amiga OS. Read what the Amiga users want and then write Dave with your own needs.

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# Editorial Content

## Should Amiga's Users be Amiga's Owners?

Dear AC,

With frustrating regularity, Amiga enthusiasts have had the future of their beloved platform yanked about from one entity to another. Maybe it is time for all the diehard Amiga owners to band together and purchase the technology for themselves. The Amiga platform could be the first computer system that is owned, managed, and financed by those who use them, the Amiga enthusiasts themselves. We should no longer look to others to mismanage this technology for us. If all the people who own and use the Amiga worldwide formed their own collective and invested a few dollars, marks, pounds, etc., it would form a sizable chunk of purchasing power. If the Amiga is really worth saving why not allow the users the right to own it. It would be something almost unprecedented in the computer industry; a computer platform owned exclusively by its users.

Mark Siedle

### Is this a first?

With all due respect to Mark, this idea has been circling throughout the Amiga community for many years. Even prior to the fall of Commodore, individuals were attempting to create a coalition of Amiga users who would own stock and have some say in the direction of Commodore and the Amiga. Unfortunately, their efforts were stymied and their position disregarded by the board of Commodore as they directed Commodore into bankruptcy.

Since the bankruptcy, the idea of Amiga users owning the Amiga continues to appear. As Amiga owners, this idea is extremely interesting. In running a company, seldom has the needs of the Amiga users been addressed. Even under ESCOM, they concentrated on the MS DOS machines which eventually collapsed their entire corporation.

### Green Bay

Fan ownership is not a new concept. According to an article by William J. Donovan in the January 26, 1997 issue of *The Providence Journal*, the Green Bay Packers is owned by 1,877 stockholders with 4,632 shares of stock. The franchise was first created in 1923. The company was reformed in 1935 (a casualty of the great depression) with new stock sold. The association came into trouble once again in 1950 and again the residents of Green Bay, Wisconsin banded together and purchased additional stock at \$25 per share.

Today the same share could sell for thousands of dollars, but no one is selling. The shares cannot be sold on the New York Stock exchange (or any open market), nor are they likely to be sold. According to Mr. Donovan, the owners of the Green Bay Packers cherish their holdings. Although they receive no dividends (the association is a nonprofit organization) or perks (not even a better price on tickets), the owners believe they have something more valuable than cash. They have a commitment to their community and the holdings are passed from parent to child as a birthright.

### Differences

While the motives of those fans is mirrored in the desires of Amiga users, there are some significant differences that would make running the Amiga in the same manner difficult. Green Bay has a management staff and 43 people on the board of directors. The Amiga is a technological company in the highly competitive field of computers. While Green Bay is involved in the competitive world of professional football, we are talking about trade secrets that go beyond a playbook.

A board of directors for Amiga would need to be responsive to the investors and it would probably be the same size as Green Bay's. The board would also need to know the essential direction and opportunities of the business. This means that projects, short and long-range, would need to be discussed. Marketing options and cooperative ventures with other companies would be more readily seen by competitors.

In the technological war, advantage is gained by being the first (OK, maybe Amiga did not always push their advantage). It would be extremely difficult to create the type of responsive management team with so many voices calling for their needs.

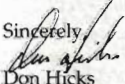
Yes, large technological companies are owned by millions of stockholders, but with two distinct differences. First, major companies are owned primarily for their investment potential. The management and board know that if they are not making money, the investors will walk. Second, in most of these firms, there are a few very large stockholders (i.e. Irving Gould of Commodore days) or investment firms who take a direct interest and a big say in how the company is run. The Amiga would have a million voices screaming for attention and with everyone investing a little, no one would be too concerned over the profitability of the firm.

While car rental agencies, airlines, steel mills, and assorted other firms have been purchased and successfully run by their employees, their success is due largely to the premise that they are protecting their jobs. Their investment is not just a dollar amount but to their livelihood. Are we Amiga users making the same commitment?

### Keeping an eye on the goal.

The best reason not to push this idea today is that it may delay the current sale. The latest word is the sale will be concluded soon (no one is saying to whom or how soon). If the trustees were handed an Amiga User buy out proposal worth more than the current bids, it would take months to organize the sale, and the Amiga would lose additional momentum.

Our best efforts today should be concentrated on the need to support the new owners and to make their marketing and sales successful. That means instead of buying stock, we need to push our efforts to sell Amigas.

Sincerely,  
  
Don Hicks  
Managing Editor

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# FEEDBACK

"Your games coverage could use a little work."

Dear AC,

First off I would like to thank you for existing and the support you offer the Amiga community. It is nice to be able to go into a local bookstore and acquire your publication. That is the reason for this letter.

I am 25 years old and have been an Amiga user since 1988 and own a CD-TV compatible A500 which I still use from time to time. An A1200 equipped with 10MB RAM and 120 meg hard drive. I await the funding for a CD-ROM of any speed, an Iomega ZIP drive and most of all a Blizzard 1260 turbo, which will be my first purchase. Yes, I do plan to expand my Amiga to the fullest. Also I have a Panasonic 3DO with lots of games. It is now two and a half years old, with no support and cost \$699.00, which is more than my A1200 cost that same year.

A little about your magazine now. I have purchased AC since I bought my first Amiga and have always thought your games coverage could use a little work. There hasn't been any coverage for a long time and I would like to see more information in this area. Games are widely overlooked in the Amiga market now because of the lack of developers. But look at the ones that are there for our pleasure.

First you have the Alien Breed 3D series which are pretty impressive to any computer user. Breathless is currently my favorite because it plays brilliantly on my fast RAM equipped 1200, and if you have the patch for it then it's 20 percent faster with more options. I would love to play it at full screen, full detail. Then there is Gloom Deluxe WAHOO! DETAIL!, Doom at 1280 x 400 resolution. Pretty impressive to me. There is also Robinson's Requiem, which if I can get it to run at a smooth speed I would never leave my home.

Then there is Capital Punishment. I have only played the 2-player demo but it is so technically astounding my friend wants it for his Sony PlayStation. Also Stardust and Super Stardust are simply as good as any console game out there. These games with the exceptions of Capital Punishment and Stardust are the reason I am so anxious to upgrade my A1200. Now I know the games scene is slow, so try to hype it up a little. I personally enjoy seeing screen shots of games. How many people do you think buy games just because they heard they were good? I don't, I want to see them. Even if you ran an article about the ten best games to buy right now. Heck, Wrath of the Demon and the Shadow of the Beast series are still eye openers.

I could go on and on. Or you could run an article about your day playing Breathless offering inside information on what awaits you in future stages and when or where you should spend your credits. I think that it could spark some interest and bring developers and publishers some eagerly awaited cash. Not to mention make AC more interesting to Amiga users that bought their system for games.

My advice to ViScorp is simple. Get the Amiga computers and software back on the shelves at Sears, Software Etc. and back to the dealers. I know it's easier said than done, ask ESCOM. The system still has a lot of quality offerings but it is declining fast.

I look forward to seeing exciting products from all developers like Nova

Design, NewTek, Maxon, DKB, Phase IV, ClickBoom, Team 17 and all others. I plan to support them or already have supported them in the past and for the future. May their bank accounts be healthy.

One last note, I don't know why AmigaWorld ceased to be publicized. Do all Amiga users a favor and let us know if hardship arrives. Believe me, if I had known what was going to happen to AmigaWorld, I would not have procrastinated with my subscription renewal.

Thanks for being here,  
Erik Stone

*Thanks for your thoughts. In response to our game coverage, we have printed almost every game review we have received and with the exception of Capitol Punishment (due to be reviewed soon) and one other title, we have reviewed every game we have received. The problem is that the European game publishers as a whole do not believe the North American market is interested in their games. Our pleas for product go unanswered. In response to that, I am sending a copy of your letter to every game developer still active in our database in hopes that we can change their outlook on the market for game software in North America.*

*As far as our own plans, AC was created for the Amiga public. We are the only postal-audited publication in North America. We take great pride in the fact that we have been able to hang on to newsstand distribution in a world where the PC and the Internet have pushed many other publications under. This is not inexpensive, but we believe the Amiga market needs that presence now more than ever. AC will remain in publication as long as there is a market to sustain it and we will do everything ethically to make that possible. I guess we don't know how to do anything else.—ED.*

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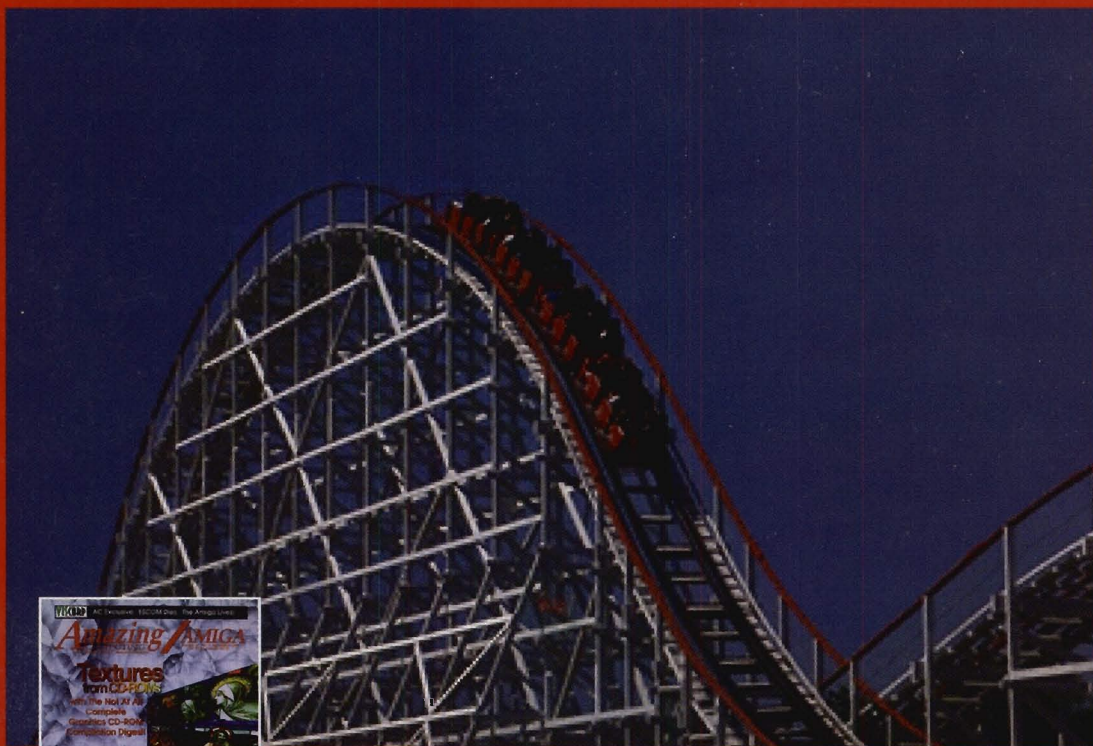
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## AmiTech '97

### Come To Sweden! AmiTech '97

AmiTech '97 is the name of this year's largest Amiga convention in Scandinavia. The show is designed to be a fresh kick-back and inspiration to the users and dealers of our favorite computer, the Amiga! The show is organized by AUGS (Amiga User Group of Sweden) and SUGA (Swedish User Group of Amiga) with the main sponsor; Distribution 4, the new but already leading Amiga computer and peripherals distributor of Scandinavia. Working with the group are the two Swedish Amiga magazines, SAM and AmigaInfo. The show will take place on Friday April 25th from 10:00-6:00, Saturday April 26th 10:00-6:00, and Sunday April 27th from 10:00-5:00.

The show will take place in Wasahallarna at the Royal Djurgården in central Stockholm. The space is divided on two floors and produce a total of 5000 square feet. A website is up and running with current information, seminar schedules, competitions and maps to the show. Please visit: <http://www.canit.se/amitech/>. More information on attending companies and persons will be available. Companies and developers interested in exhibiting and/or seminars may contact Distribution 4 at the below address or email. General email and questions to: [amitech@sam.canit.se](mailto:amitech@sam.canit.se), business, companies and developers: [info@tricom.se](mailto:info@tricom.se)

Distribution 4, Attn: Riku Bergkvist, Svarthacksgatan 41, 753 32 Uppsala, Sweden, Tel: +46-18-12-4009 Fax: +46-18-10 0650.

### Draw Studio CD

LH Publishing has announced the launch of the CD version of DrawStudio. This new release is significant for many reasons. If you use a bitmap application to create an image or title in a bitmap application like DPaint or Personal Paint, the image is fixed on the page. So if you want to stretch the text or re-arrange the objects, it is often very difficult to do or impossible. With DrawStudio, all this has changed because this application is object based. That enables you to create a piece of text and resize it, distort it

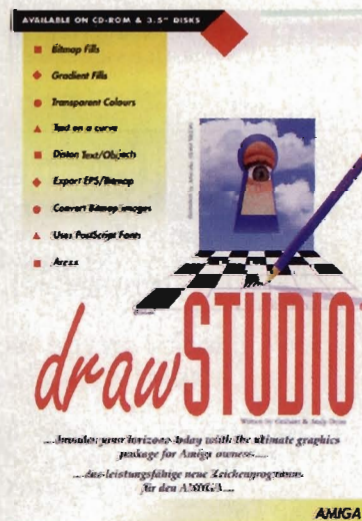
*The press releases and news announcements in New Products are from Amiga vendors and others. While Amazing Computing maintains the right to edit these articles, the statements, etc. made in these reports are those of the vendors and not Amazing Computing.*

and much more without any loss of quality. You can come back at a later stage and alter the image again and again and again.

When you have finished creating your image, it can be exported as a bitmap, in many different formats, and at a resolution of your choosing, with or without anti-aliasing. DrawStudio also includes features like bitmap fills and translucency.

DrawStudio can also be used as a structured drawing program. The CD release can import the Amiga standard structured format of DH2D-IFF (Art Expression, ProVector) and export as an EPS (with a bitmap header). There is shortly going to be a new Load filter introduced so customers can import Illustrator 88 files. This filter will be freely available. Because the elements on the page are structured, they can be printed from the program at the maximum resolution of your printer or exported to be used in many popular applications such as Wordworth and Final Writer.

DrawStudio CD's contents include: DrawStudio V1.1 (Both FPU and Non-FPU versions); English & German; ImageStudio 2.3.0 (For 68000 and 68020+ Amigas); TextureStudio (Requires an FPU); Textures (in excess of a thousand textures); Photographs (Original images); PostScript Fonts (more than 500 taken from the EMC CD8);





# Custom VistaPro Animations

Chaocity is now offering its expertise with VistaPro with a new service to provide commercial VistaPro animations at customer specifications. Flyovers, flybys, morphs, backgrounds and more. We can provide animation paths or work with customer paths. We can provide DEM data where available or use customer data. (We can also work from paper topo maps to create DEMs for an additional fee.) Animations provided in MPEG, ANIM, AVI or FLC format. Additional charge for output to videotape.

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Also available in Germany, Austria and Switzerland from:

Haage & Partner Computer GmbH, Telephone +49 (0) 60 07 93 00 50, Fax +49 (0) 60 07 75 43, Email [100654.3133@compuserve.com](mailto:100654.3133@compuserve.com)

Please Note: DrawStudio is also available on floppy disk (the program still requires a hard drive though). The floppy disk package has an RRP of £59.95 and consists of: 2 program disks (DrawStudio only), 2 art disks, and MUI disk  
AVAILABLE UPGRADE From ImageStudio: (Save £10)  
ImageStudio to DrawStudio Floppy Disk version £49.95  
ImageStudio to DrawStudio CD version £64.95  
From DrawStudio floppy disk pack to CD version £19.95  
Prices do not include postage.

## 7 New CD-ROM Products From Schatztruhe

**Meeting Pearls Vol IV** - Amiga Technologies certainly knew why they chose the Meeting Pearls II as a freebie to be included with their Q-Drive. This title contains high-quality, well-tested software on this crammed CD. A clever system has been devised to protect the lovers of Amiga games from many undesired crashes. Several different search tools (based on MUI and AmigaGuide) make finding and executing of software packages straight from the CD a snap. With this CD, no archives need to be unpacked, all programs can conveniently be started from the WorkBench. For the first time, protection bits, which used to get discarded during CD-ROM production are preserved. Access tools have also been noticeably improved.

**TurboCalc V4.0** - TurboCalc 4 enhances the best selling Amiga spreadsheet by adding several new functions: folder management (manage any number of sheets within a folder), display is scalable using zoom, postscript output (including sheets as charts as well as EPS), user-definable toolbar, animated graphical charts, cell notes, context menus (right mouse-button), autofill and autocorrect, context-sensitive on-line help, calculation revised and optimised, definable row and column names, and numerous further enhancement tools.

**Golden Demos** - Do you belong to those people not using their Amiga only for boring office purposes? You do? Well, then this collection is what you have waited for. Find all the events of 8 years of Amiga-demo-scene, a community of young, skilled Amigafans producing all of these graphic- and sounddemos, compiled on this CD-ROM. Sorted by Amiga systems (AGA & OCS) and their categories (demos, intros,



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**SNAP ADO**

**AnimWorkshop**

**PIXEL 3-D Professional** \$195

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- Works with the Video Flyer
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# TERMITE TCP

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- ✓ Termite TCP is smaller, easier to use, consumes fewer system resources, and is faster online than any alternative. The provided clients, written documentation, and regular Termite make it the ONLY one stop telecommunications solution for your Amiga.
- ✓ Competitive upgrades are available from AmiTCP or Miami with proof of purchase.

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## Coming Soon! PRO CLIENT PACK

We are proud to announce the release (April '97) of Professional versions of the internet clients supplied with Termite TCP.

- ✓ **Termite FTP PRO** includes the complete FTP command set and adds exciting features like dual directory view and drag and drop file transfers.
- ✓ **Termite Telnet PRO** extends the standard telnet client to include features like editable review buffers, programmable keyboard macros, and zmodem file transfers!
- ✓ **Termite Mail PRO** is the complete e-mail solution for single users or businesses alike with powerful features like multiple mail box support, automatic email posting and retrieval, flexible addressbook, macros, and drag & drop mailing.

Each of the Professional clients will run under AmiTCP, Miami, or TermiteTCP. They will be available separately or as part of the ProClient Pack, which will also include additional bonus clients. (P.S. Termite News is coming soon too!)

**CINEMA 4D** Version 3 Upgrades are now available. Also exciting new Cinema 4D addons: **Cinema World** is a flexible and powerful automatic world and terrain generator; **Cinema Font** a large collection of scalable 3D Postscript fonts. A 4D world awaits your command!

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Circle 142 on Reader Service card.

slideshows, musicdisks and diskmag), all of the programs are executable via mouse-click on a comfortable graphical user interface.

**Aminet® CD: 15, 16, and 17** - Aminet is the world's largest collection of freely distributable Amiga software. Schatztruhe has announced the release of three volumes of Aminet: CD 15, 16, and 17. The newest of these is dated February 1997. Each volume contains more than 1 gigabyte (uncompressed) of software in thousands of archives. CD 15 features a special focus on animations, and 143 MPEG animations were included. CD 16 features a special focus on modules, with nearly 2,000 high-quality music modules being included. More than 600 MB new software appears on CD 17.

**Aminet Set 4** - Schatztruhe has also announced the release of Aminet® Set 4. Up to 25,000 users access the vast archives every day, and countless programmers release their software directly on Aminet®. More than five years after its inception, Aminet® now holds the equivalent of 11,000 floppy disks. AMINET® SET 4 offers you everything that was added to the archive since

AMINET® SET 3 was made, plus a full version of Directory Opus 5.11 including an inexpensive upgrade-offer to Directory Opus 5.5 limited until October 31st, 1997. AMINET® SET 4, dated January 1997, consists of approximately four gigabytes of software in 7,800 archives. Since the release of Aminet 16 more than 610 MB of new software have appeared.

Schatztruhe, Gesellschaft für Software mbH,  
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 Tel: 011-49-201-78-8778, Fax: 011-49-201-79-8447, Email: stefano@schatztruhe.de,  
 WWW: http://www.schatztruhe.de.

## PC Keyboard Adaptor for Amiga

National Amiga and MicroBit Research have come up with a new and innovative solution that will allow you to use a 104-key PC keyboard with an Amiga 2000/3000 or 4000! Insert104 is small, simple and inexpensive. They have mapped a PC104 key keyboard to an Amiga keymap by using the Windoze keys as Amiga keys. They have also created some extra special keyboard functions to make using your

Amiga easier. New features include: left Amiga-m to switch between screens, left Amiga-n to take you back to WorkBench, left Amiga-v for OK, and left Amiga-b for CANCEL. At a suggested retail price of only \$39CAD, it's easy to upgrade your keyboard today. For more information on the Insert104, hit our website at [www.nationalamiga.com](http://www.nationalamiga.com) to place your order.

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(continued on page 47)

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- Batch Process Frames To Clips or Stills
- Batch File Conversions
- Build projects and automatically put transitions in between clips
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- Globally Change Transition Speeds, FS Lengths, Volume, etc...

...the list goes on and on. Best of all, YOU are firmly in the pilot's seat.

Control Tower accomplishes it's many tasks by using many flexible and powerful Macros & ARexx scripts in conjunction with the Switcher, ImageFX, Toaster Paint, Amiga DOS, and LightWave to automatically process your frames.

With Control Tower you can rest assured that all your Flyer Projects will arrive safely ahead of schedule at the terminal - and your baggage will never end up in Reykjavik.

Flyer 4.1 & Image FX 2.6 or above required for Control Tower.

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Lightwave users at:**

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## Visual Inspirations

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All manufacturers trademarks are acknowledged.

# Visual FX



You don't have to go all the way to Hollywood any more to get those fantastic visual effects you've seen on the big screen. Now you can have Visual FX premiering on your monitor screen at thousands and thousands of dollars below the cost of those mega-expensive high-end ADO type systems.

You can harness all of the power of ImageFX and begin turning out top notch images and video sequences NOW! No previous ImageFX experience is needed!

For those of you who are already familiar with ImageFX, you have the option to change any of our default settings to meet your needs. Whether you're a beginner or highly experienced videographer, either way Visual FX will give your interactive and video productions all the sharp quality you've come to expect from ImageFX. Visual FX is also perfect for using with the NewTek Flyer, VLAB Motion Board, Draco, PAR, and the Digital Broadcaster Elite.

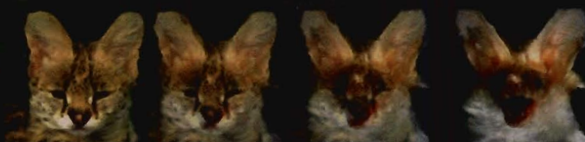
For those using nonlinear video editing systems, the transition FX are designed specifically for creating transitions between video clips, and the Special FX templates provide fast and easy access to a number of high quality special video effects which are easily modified and manipulated for your needs. Each volume comes with 20 effects, each of which has a full 30 frame preview animation attached to it so you will know exactly what the effect will look like. All you have to do is select what images, sequences, or Flyer Clips you want to use, and Visual FX will do the rest. Our requesters actually open up right on the ImageFX screen and walk you through each step. The User Interface is also designed to allow easy setup of multiple effects for automated batch processing.

Volumes for LightWave also available!  
ImageFX 2.6 or above required for Visual FX.

Circle 145 on Reader Service card.

# Visual Inspirations





# Morphimals

By R. Shammis Mortier

## Basic Morphing is not as hard as it once was, if you follow a few simple Rules of the Game.

The phrase "morph" comes from the word Metamorph and Metamorphosis. To metamorph means to change the body structure (from "morphology") in a radical way ("meta" means very large). The whole idea of metamorphosing itself comes from one of the capabilities said to belong to the ancient Greek god Hermes, and it is also found in myths of the Native Americans of the plains. This personality trait is known as "masking", and the being who is a master of masking is known as a Trickster.

It is the trickster's sworn obligation to put one over on the observer. Being a trickster allows the gods to appear as humans, in order to communicate secret advice not otherwise possible. In native American traditions, the trickster figure is found most

often as an animal, commonly a fox or a raccoon. Most often, the masked animal (and remember that raccoons really do wear a mask!) gets a human being into necessary trouble, trouble that leads the humans to perceive her or his situation in a new light, and so gain the necessary skills to change that situation.

### Computer Artists as Tricksters

As computer artists and animators, the term morphing takes on an expanded meaning and use. We say something is being morphed if its shape is being digitally manipulated into another shape. Static pictures can be morphed. All you need is a target picture and a source picture.

Animations can also be morphed. For that, you need a source and target animated sequence. The processes are

basically the same, though morphing animations together requires more time preparing the original sequences.

When you morph two images together, you can wind up with another image (a combination of a certain percentage of the mix of A and B) or an animation. Morphing two static images to produce an animation shows an even transformation of image A becoming image B.

A cousin of morphing is warping. Warping involves a single image. When you warp an image, the result can be either a single picture, or an animation. The resulting single picture shows the picture at some percentage of the way towards its final warped phase, while a warping animation shows a smooth moving transition from the non-warped picture to its fully warped alternative.

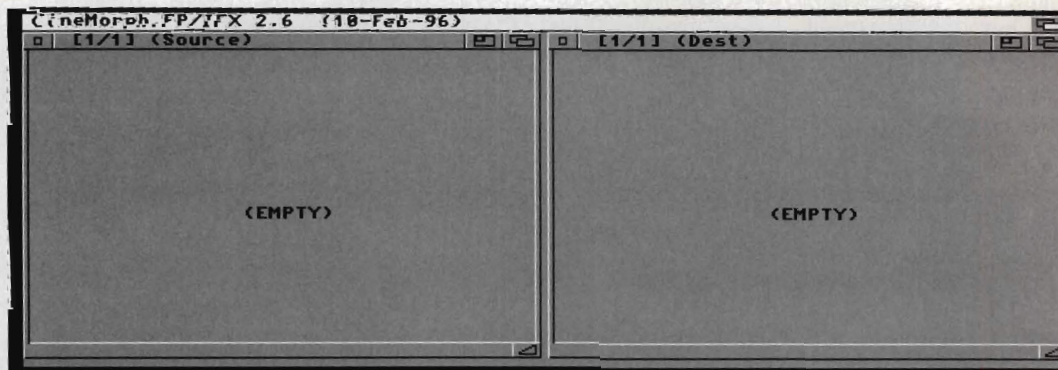


Figure 1. When you first bring up Cinemorph, you are presented with the Source and Target areas where images must be loaded.



## Rules of the Game

First, a word about Alpha Channel Compositing, since we use it in the following paragraphs. An Alpha Channel can be best described as a separate 256 gray level graphic or animation. The Alpha Channel represents the graphic information as a series of gray levels that allow or deny transparency. Commonly, where the grays lean towards black, more of the composited picture or animation will show through. Where the grays lean towards white, the opposite is the case, and more of the composited image or animation will show through.

When you see that a graphic is spoken of as being "32 bit" that means it is a graphic sandwich. 24 of the 32 bits are used for the RGB color data (with each RGB channel having its own 256 possibilities for shading, or 8 bit color, with  $8 \times 3 = 24$ ). The remaining 8 bits, 256 separate shades, are used for the Alpha gray levels.

There are several ways to Alpha Composite images and animations. Owners of the NewTek Toaster have it the easiest, since they can target Alpha Compositing as a part of what the Toaster offers, and can avoid a lot of handwork.

## Warping Rules

Now back to warping and morphing. There are certain things to keep in mind when generating a morphing and a warping animation, and some of these rules are different for each. For warping, keep the following suggestions in mind.

1. Warping animations can show either small subtle changes or radical alterations as the final result. A subtle change might be Lincoln's mouth, from the image on a five dollar bill, breaking into a smile. A more radical approach might be Lincoln's head shrinking into his collar.
2. Warping animations can use either a single color backdrop or a pictorial backdrop. If the warping animation is subtle, either backdrop can be used

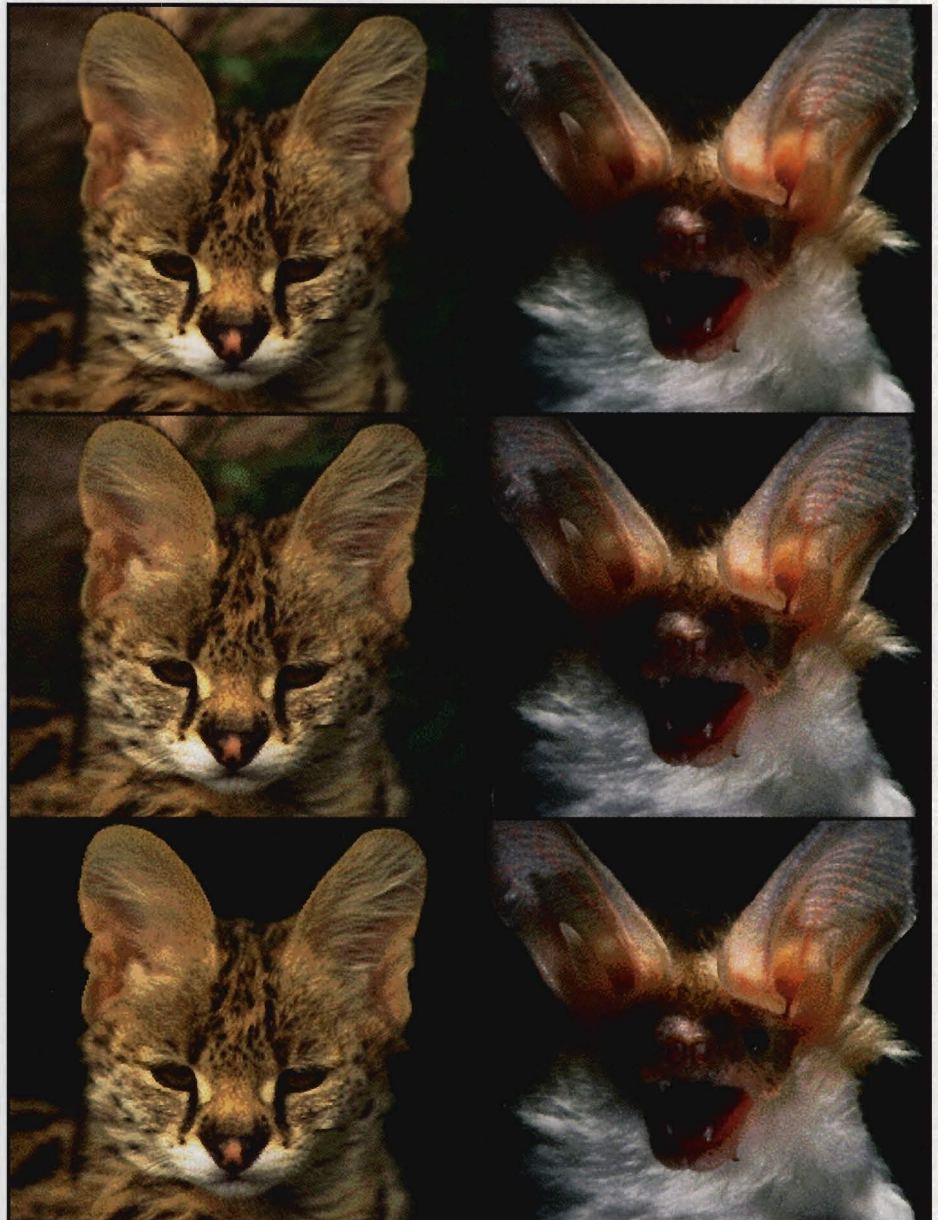


Figure 2 (Top). Step two. Choose your images. Can you guess why I chose these two? Look at the ears and the expressions. From a demure kitten to a fierce bat. The ears are too good to be true, and will form a similar visual center.

Figure 3 (Middle). Figure 2 shows the images as 24-bit, while here we see them as dithered 256 color images. Not a lot is lost.

Figure 4 (Bottom). It is necessary to get rid of the background behind the cat. The same black that forms the background behind the bat is used.

equally well. If the warping change is to be radical, the backdrop will either have to be protected so as not to move with the animation, or a choice of a single color backdrop will have to be the option. If you use a pictorial backdrop when the resulting warping effect is too

global as far as the main image, it will be difficult to protect the backdrop from moving a little in the animation.

3. Alpha Channel Compositing is the best choice for radical changes in the graphic for a warping animation. Alpha



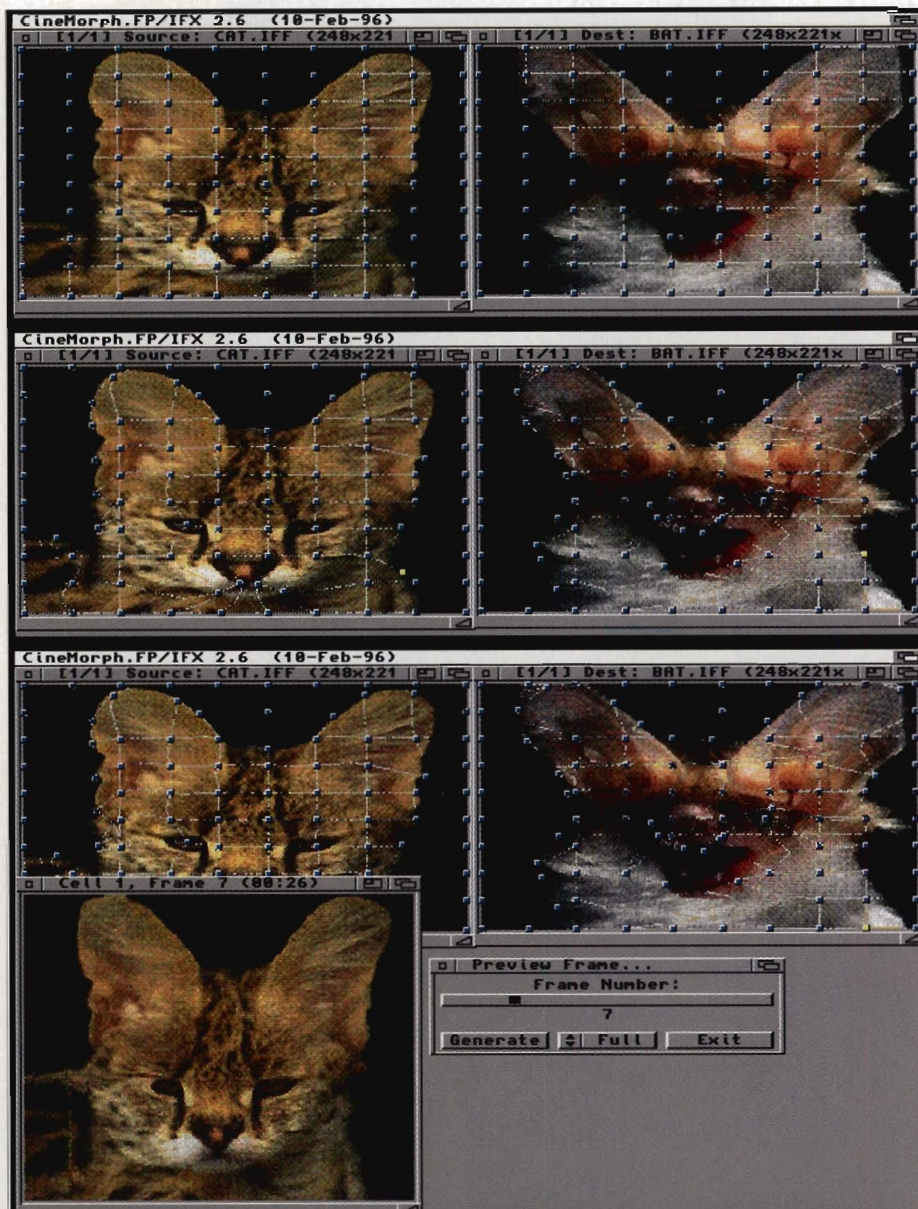


Figure 5 (Top). The Source and Target (Destination) images are loaded in.  
 Figure 6 (Middle). Now the control points of the morphing mesh are adjusted, first on the Source image and then on the Target image. Active points turn yellow.  
 Figure 7 (Bottom). Use the Preview option to check what effect moving the points is having on the final picture.

Channel Compositing necessitates that you first remove the pictorial backdrop and substitute a single color. Then the warping animation is generated. This animation, frame by frame, is then composited over a separate pictorial backdrop. Alpha Channel Compositing is used best when the pictorial backdrop is itself an animation. Simple compositing, cutting the

image out of its single color backdrop and placing it against a picture, is used when there is no need for the backdrop to be animated.

4. Though any graphic can be warped into an animation, contrasty images work best. By contrasty, I mean images that have features that stand out from the total picture. In

pictorial images, this includes mouths, eyes, teeth, and hair. A warping portraiture animation does the same thing a caricature drawing does, it exaggerates body features. Warping animations can also be applied to full body shots. Non portraiture images should have a contrasty differential between foreground and background elements to work well as warping animation.

## Morphing Rules

Morphing rules differ somewhat from warping rules, simply because more than a single image is involved. Some things to remember when developing a morphing animation are as follows.

1. Morphing animations always work best when you remove the backgrounds in both the source and target images. This is common sense. Unless you want the animation to show a change in the total picture, this has to be your first step. Morphing animations that do allow the entire picture to change are used best for transitions from one scene to the next. Otherwise, they take too much drama away from the magic of watching one thing turn into another. As with warping animations, you can Alpha composite (or just plain composite) the animation with a separate background image or animation after the morphing is complete.
2. Because you are working with two images instead of one, the image choreography becomes exceedingly important in morphing animations. It is best (vital is more like it) that each image be oriented as much alike as possible. If you have a face as a source that is facing left, while the target faces right, the morphing effect will be lost in the blobby and confusing nature of the transition.



3. Morphing animation does not have to incorporate two similar species of objects. As Odo on *Star Trek Deep Space Nine* has demonstrated so well, it can be just as effective to morph a humanoid or animal into a lamp as to morph one humanoid into another. It all depends on what effect you want to achieve for the story you are telling.
4. Morph point placement is absolutely critical. The point on image A that will relate to the point on image B must be carefully considered. Major points should always be placed first, followed by minor points, and finally by source and target outlines. The computer looks at point one on image A, and notices where that same point appears on image B, and also notices the reverse. Place morph points with care, as an infinite number of different morphs can be created by simply adjusting point placement.
5. Since a warping animation has to reference one image, the source and target frames will be the same size. This is not true when it comes to morphing animation. You have to manually make sure that each image file is the same size (in pixels) and resolution. This has to be done before you attempt to load the image into any morphing software.

### Morphimals

You will need two images of animals to accomplish this project. Make sure the images are the same size, and that the features on the animals are clear and sharp. I would suggest images with just animal faces, at least for your first experiments. A resolution of 320 x 200 is a good size. I prefer hi-res overscan. The images can be 24-bit if you plan to single frame record them out as an animation. If you want to plan an IFF animation as a result however, you should translate



Figure 8. Checking Frames along the way gives you a good idea of how the morph will progress.

Figure 9. Selected frames from a 30 frame Nova Cinemorph animation.





Figure 10. Here is a sample of an alternate morphal sequence, from docility to ferocity in 30 frames.

the images to at most a 256-color palette (and if you aren't doing this on an AGA system, try getting good 16-

color hi-res images or 32-color lo-res). You will need ImageFX from Nova Design as well.

## ImageFX Cinemorph

Cinemorph is a module in ImageFX, so you have to own ImageFX (and if you don't, and have an abiding interest in Amiga graphics and animation, shame on you!). Double click on the Cinemorph icon in the ImageFX drawer.

Under the Cell menu, select Set Frames. Change the number to 30. Under the Render menu, select HiRes and Interlace, and in the BitPlanes requester, select 8. Non-AGA users should set the Biplane depth to 4. Also under the Render menu, select Ping-Pong, which will allow the animation to play start to finish and then reverse. Now load the Source and Target (Destination) images into their proper places, by selecting Load Image from the Cell menu.

Now it's time to move the control points. Move a point on the Source image, and look at its counterpart on the target image. The point will turn yellow. Move it to a corresponding feature, that is, if it represents the left eye on the Source image, it should be placed over the left eye on the Target image. Do this with as many points as you can, selecting major features first, then secondary features, and finally the outline of the image.

Use the Preview function under the Morph menu regularly to check your transitions. When satisfied, render the final results either as an IFF animation or as single frames.

## Where to use Morphing Animations

When you want to spice up a boring video, use a morphing animation as a transitional piece. Think about making your own monster movies as well, showing a person's face transitioning to a morphimal. You can also morph top or from a text block, spicing up a title. Find a picture of your relatives or friends when they were babies, and morph them into the features they have today. There is a lot of fun and creative learning wrapped up in generating morphing animations.

•AC•



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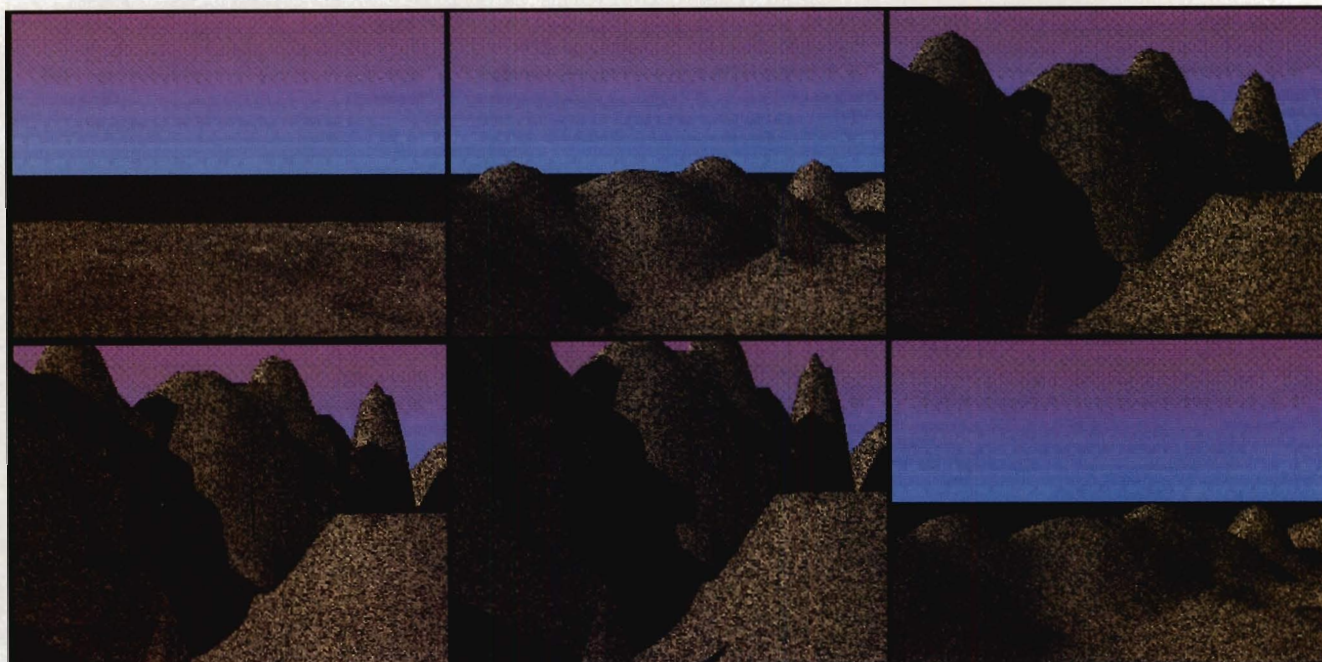


Figure 1. One simple way to attract attention is to take a normally stable object, like a landscape, and stretch it out so that it appears to grow over time. This animation loops, so the landscape appears to move endlessly back and forth. The surprise is found in each of the unique hills that are produced, elongating the interest of the viewer. This is a LightWave animation.

## Tips for Animators: Part 1

A few tricks to keep your animations interesting whether they are for your computer buddies, a tape presentation, or to dazzle viewers on the Web.

by R. Shamms Mortier

So you finally have all of the digital animation hardware and software you need, your Amiga is loaded to the gills with RAM, and your hard drive is waiting for files expectantly, like a baby bird with open mouth. Lucky you! But then the terror sets in, "What can I create to get involved in all of this?"

Believe it or not, having all of the right tools is only part of the battle. No matter if you are a beginner or a seasoned professional, having some idea of what to do next is made simpler when you are working for others. After all, they set both the task and the deadlines, so there is never a question (or time for) artistic angst.

But for a moment, let's say that you have a breathing space, and that no client is in sight (and let's also fantasize that that doesn't make you nervous because you have a temporary nest egg in the bank that allows you a

little time to play). Perhaps you want to explore your animation software deeper, familiarizing yourself with tools and processes you just didn't have time for previously. Maybe you are thinking about recording some animations for a portfolio of your work. In that case, there are a few things to keep in mind as far as both content and general animation guidelines.

I will not pretend that I have suddenly pulled the following wisdom from thin air. Like all of us that are involved in a discipline that is also a craft, we see clearly because we have learned much from others, and we stand on their shoulders when we pass information to still others in our community of peers.

You can probably name a few teachers and mentors whose remarks and suggestions have supported your efforts over the years as a creative

artist or animator. Or, if you are a beginner, perhaps you are still studying with a person who fits this description. My graphics design teachers were many and varied, but my animation teacher (who is in large part responsible for the aphorisms I will share with you) was a unique individual.

His name is David Ehrlich. He remains a well respected world-class animator (not involved with computers at all), who spends his time teaching animation to groups of children all over the world. He also produces his own animations, usually with hundreds of colored pencils and thousands of sheets of tracing paper. When I studied with him, it was to produce animations for 8mm film, but what he had to say about animating in general is just as applicable to computer animation today.



## The Core Point

The basic rule (that I still refer to in my work) can be stated thus: "Always work to surprise the audience". That's it, short and sweet, but it has infinite implications, some of which I would like to share with you.

By "surprising the audience", David meant that an animation should always strive to do things the viewer doesn't expect, so they can't "read ahead". Though this doesn't apply to 100% of the animations or animation assignments you will encounter, it does act as a constant reminder that the animator has to be an objective

of what I mean by incorporating surprise in an animation.

## How to get there from here

So what elements might lead to creating a "surprise" in your animations. One that we will not dwell on very long in this article is the addition of special effects ("FX"). SpecialFX are extremely useful in creating surprises, but so many articles have devoted volumes of space to them at this point, that it suffices to say that though we recognize their value, we should also explore other surprise territory. So for our purposes here, we will leave

that "don't belong". The expectation is that a tree will have green leaves, not purple, and certainly not chrome. That is exactly why you should consider the unexpected the next time you render a tree.

The first thing that happens when a doesn't-belong color or texture/surface is viewed, is that the viewer silently asks "why was that done". No matter what the answer or the aesthetic criticism that may follow, one thing is for sure: you have engaged the viewer and stopped them in their tracks. The suspicion, built upon a long history of propaganda about art

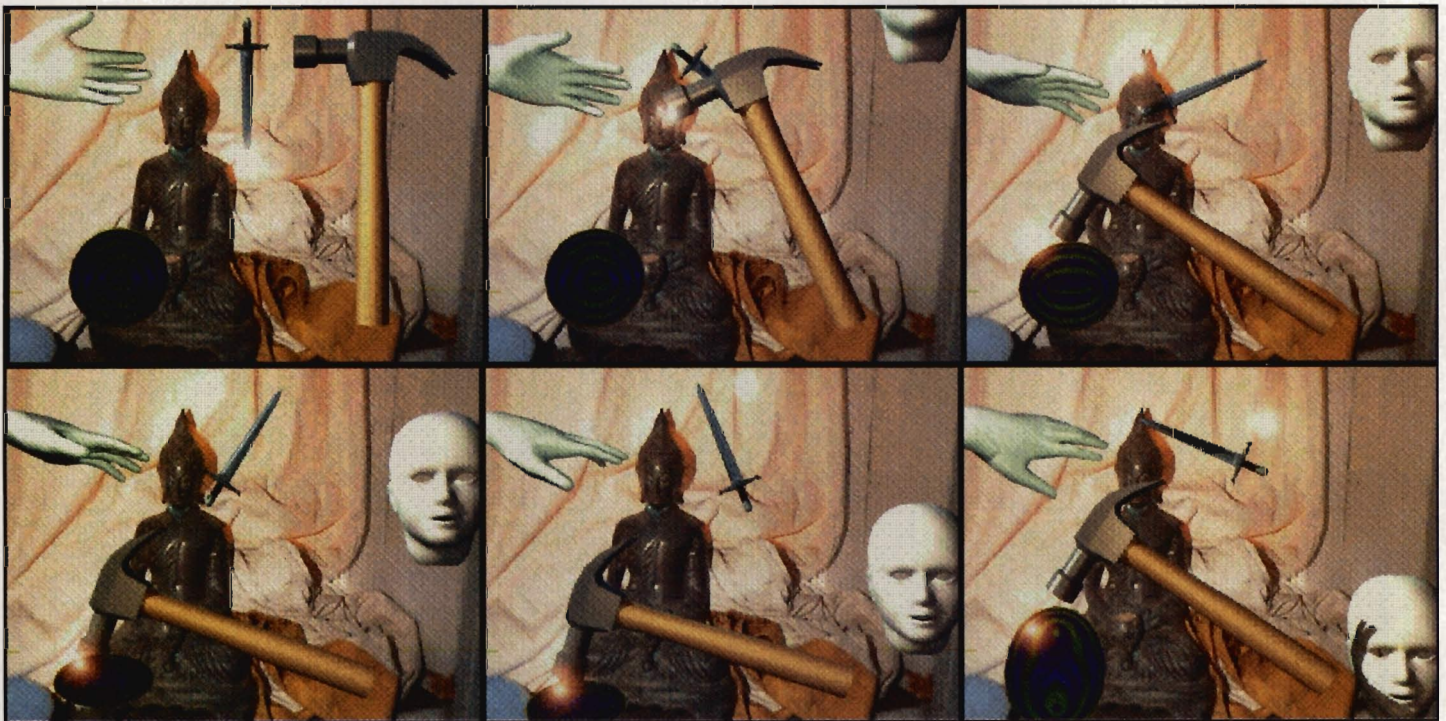


Figure 2. The secret of using a multitude of diverse objects in animation is to make some more dominant than others. Dominant elements tend to move less, so the dominant element in this animation is the goddess figure in the back (which doesn't move at all). All of the other elements in the composition seem to relate to that figure, and all will be seen as somehow defining relationships based upon that figure. This is a LightWave animation.

member of the audience as well as the creator of the work.

We are so used to telegraphing our future moves. The baseball pitcher goes through the motions of winding up, eyeing the batter, packing all of that potential energy in the soon-to-be released pitch. But then, on a dime, the pitcher spins and throws the ball to second base, just to warn the runner. The audience gasps, because the action refuted their belief about what was to follow the windup. That is a good part

lightning, sparks, morphing and other FX practices to other articles. That said, here is a list of practices guaranteed to add surprise to your animations, especially if they are short ones, no matter what animation software you use on any platform (this stuff even works on the ho-hum spinning logo!):

## Color

In general, color surprise is based upon the use of colors (we will also include surfaces and textures here)

and artists, is "this is trying to tell me something".

## Don't-Belong Objects

Include objects in a scene that "don't belong". You can render a very photo-realistic 3D interior design, for instance, with everything in place. Your viewers will feel extremely comfortable by this presentation, and probably so bored that they will be hard pressed to remember what they saw five seconds after switching the presentation off.



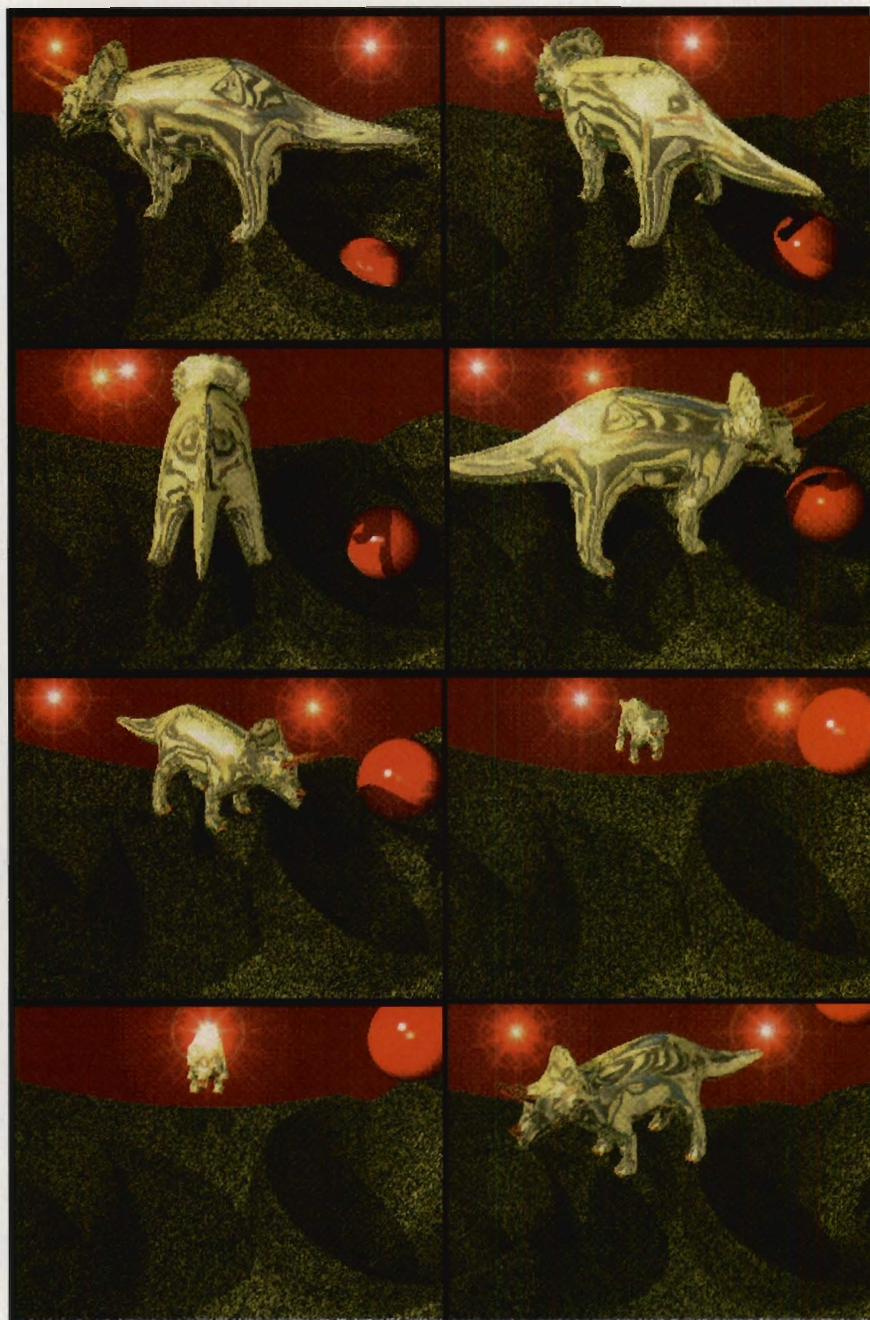


Figure 3. This Triceratops animation demonstrates a more deliberate use of color. If you look closely at this animation frame, you can see that the colors of the elements were not chosen to evoke everyday reality, but to act in a way that pops each of them off the graphic. There is a conscious use of complimentary color pairs here: yellow (Triceratops) and blue (ball), and red (sky) and green (landscape). The chromed surface of the Triceratops also acts as an animation in itself, reflecting different patterns of its environment as it spins.

Why should they care? They have seen thousands of photo-realistic 3D rooms before in their everyday experience. But what if there is a miniature giraffe running around the perimeter of the end table in the corner? Certainly very few viewers have encountered that vision before,

except perhaps in a dream or hallucination. Remember, out of the ordinary anything in an animation always leaves the viewer suspicious that the artist is trying to "tell me something", even when that's not the case.

A comparable case in point is Carroll's Jabberwocky poem in Alice in

Wonderland. Though you don't know what it means, it's something few readers forget to pay attention to. Millions of person hours have been spent trying to decipher what this poem "means", adding to Alice in Wonderland's allure and mystique.

Any elements that exist in the same environment are perceived to "speak" with each other. This is in large part what we mean when we use the term "Surrealism". Dali and the other Surrealist masters knew quite well that the human eye always suspects that any visual elements in a composition are seen to be communicating some messages back and forth.

In the case above, the viewer is provoked to ask, "what is causing the giraffe to run around the table? Where did this small giraffe come from? What is the giraffe trying to communicate?" Strange as it seems, the viewer is also provoked to wonder if more time spent viewing the animation won't clear some of these things up.

### Change Perceptions

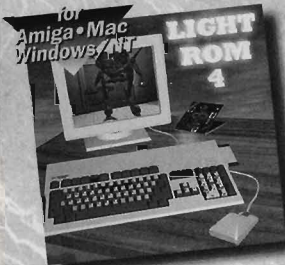
Alter elements unpredictably as they move. If person A throws a ball to person B, our inborn familiarity with the laws of trajectory in Earth gravity allows us to "read ahead", to expect that the ball will follow a certain path from A to B, from an expected limited range of possibilities. But what if the ball goes half way to B, then suddenly falls like a brick? Or what if it goes to B, replacing B's head, while the new B personality throws his head back to A? What if midway through the flight, the ball deflates, or enlarges and explodes? Whatever the unexpected choice, one thing's for sure... the viewer will take notice.

### Loop De Loop

A small animation sequence can be looped, meaning played over and over again. It can also be "ping-ponged", meaning played start to finish, then finish to start, over and over again. This is both the blessing and the bane of short animations. It is a blessing because it means a small animated sequence can take up more time. It is a bane because seeing an



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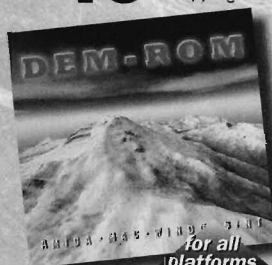


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animated sequence any more than twice through immediately triggers a viewer's expectation quotient, so there is little surprise after two plus times. So how can we take advantage of what looping provides without boring the viewer?

The first way to increase the staying power of a looping sequence is to place enough variable elements in the scene, each doing their own thing, so that the entirety of the composition cannot be appreciated at one glance. Some of this interest can be created by making some of the elements reflective and shadow-casting. This allows the viewer to get caught up in reflected environments and the movement of shadows across surfaces, as well as in the objects themselves. Never allow all of the elements in a looped animation to sequence in perfect rhythm (unless you're creating a dance sequence or the like). Vary the keyframes when different objects rotate or transform, so that each is its own internal choreogra-

phy. A viewer will be prompted to look at one element for a few loops, then another, and only at the last be attracted to how the whole clockwork moves.

The second way of increasing the allure of a looped animation is Amiga specific as far as I know. This is a feature from DPaint that I have used a lot when recording a looped animation. It is simple to learn and use. As the animation is playing on a DPaint screen (it works best if the animation is a 16 color hi-res, or a 32 color non-hires), hit the "R" key. This instantly reverses the direction of the animation. You can use it as many times as you want, watching as your motions reverse in response. It is a great way to make characters dance to a beat, and it creates the sense of timelessness in the middle of a timed looped sequence. If you record this to tape while you are doing it, you will make the most use out of this method.

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A Web surfer will not stay where the waves are too still for too long. Web animations must be interesting, to distinguish one Web page from the millions (and climbing) of others.

Animations on the Web have to be mesmerizing from the get-go, because many times they are seen even as they download. Web animations are tiny, commonly between 80 and 160 pixels square, to accommodate current limited bandwidth and speed of playback. If all of the above rules apply anywhere, they definitely apply to animated sequences on the Web. The more interesting and creative you can make a short running tiny Web animation, the more visitors will flock to your site.

That's all for this time around. See you in ROMulan space. Enjoy!

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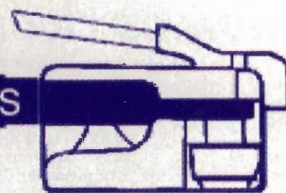
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# on line

by Rob Hays

## amiga telecommunications



**AmigaWorld is Back!!! Well, sort of.  
Also, learn the latest on MiniMail, MUI (version 3.7),  
and Voyager NG**

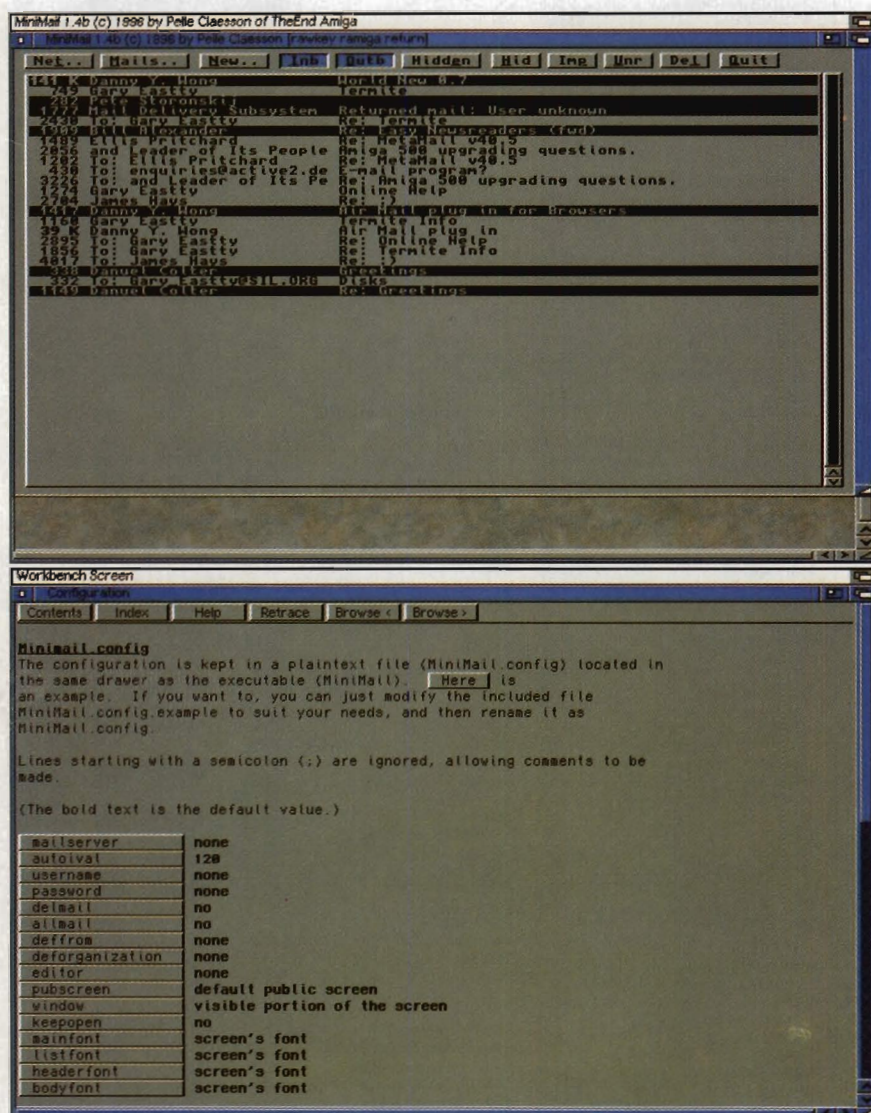
Continuing with our look at e-mail programs currently available for the Amiga, we start this month with something a little different.

### MiniMail

MiniMail from Pelle Claesson differs from the previous programs we have looked at in that it does not require Magic User Interface (MUI). You may recall that MUI provides the interface used by most Amiga Web Browsers, with the exception of AWebII. While most users have accepted the extra resources drain imposed by MUI for the benefits it provides, it is not universally liked. If you have resisted installing MUI on your system, or just never seem to have enough memory, then MiniMail is just what you have been looking for.

MiniMail provides a clean, Amiga-ized interface when started (Figure 1). The row of buttons across the top of the screen controls the functioning of the program. You can choose to display mail from either your In box, Out box, or both. Individual messages can be marked as important, hidden from sight, or deleted.

Choosing to Reply or create a New message brings up the editor of your choice, such as Ed, since no internal editor is included. If you have supplied a signature file to include, this is appended to your message.





After writing your message, a requestor opens with string gadgets for the address and subject lines. Also there are buttons to attach files to your mail, edit the message, or save it. Here is your last chance to make changes to your message, if you save it then remember something you wanted to add, MiniMail has no way to re-open the message for editing.

Configuration is a bit more difficult than some of the other mail programs we have looked at, requiring you to edit a separate text file. The AmigaGuide documentation describes the changes needed well (Figure 2), and an example file is included. Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions (MIME) are support, as well as linking to Browsers such as AWebII, and Voyager for use as a mailto application. A user-defined database of aliases is available, but no address book.

MiniMail is currently at version 1.4b, and the 103k file is available from AmiNet in the comm/mail subdirectory. Requirements are AmigaOS 2.0+, either AmiTCP version 3+, MLink, or Miami. Additionally, the reqtools.library version 38+ is required. This can be found on AmiNet in the util/libs subdirectory as the file ReqToolsUsr.lha.

MiniMail is emailware, meaning the author would like an email from you if you use his program.

## Updates

Speaking of MUI, an update to version 3.7 has just been released. There are many small changes and updates, most notably are the fixes for some problems experienced by users with 68060 CPU's. Go to:

<http://www.sasg.com>

for the latest news.

## Voyager NG

Since the initial release of the Voyager Browser version 1.0, hints have been dropped, and expectations raised by the promise of a more advanced version. Starting in late January, the first pre-release of this new version started appearing on the Voyager homepage:

<http://www.vapor.com>

The biggest news is the support of frames with this version, the first Amiga Browser to do so (Figure 3). Frames are separate areas within the main Browser window, each of which can display a separate document. As of this writing (early February), the second pre-release version has just been released. While some things are not quite right yet, major progress has been made, and by the time you read this, Voyager NG will likely be even further improved. Look for more info here later.

If you would like to keep up on the latest Voyager news, send an e-mail message to:

[voyager-request@vapor.com](mailto:voyager-request@vapor.com)

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Circle 124 on Reader Service card.



Figure 3 (Top): Voyager NG showing its frame capability.

Figure 4 (Bottom): The Amigaworld site at : <http://www.amigaworld.com/>



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**Business Master**

**Stark Reality Software**

**A/R, A/P, G.L. Invoices, Billing Inventory, Payroll Client List**

Circle 126 on Reader Service card.

The body of the message should consist of the word:

**add**

Now a copy of all the messages posted to this newsgroup will be forwarded to your e-mail address, and you can be one of the first to learn of new enhancements. If you want a list of the various commands and options available on the mail server, send the word:

**help**

in the body of a message. You can also have the Voyager file sent to you by e-mail. Send a message to:

**fileserv@vapor.com**

with the message consisting of:

**send voyager**

Since this version of Voyager is compressed using the lzx program, you will probably want to make a stop at your favorite AmiNet mirror. Go to the util/arc subdirectory, and download the 161k file lzx121.lha.

### HotList of the Month:

**AmigaWorld???**

**<http://www.amigaworld.com/>**

No, this is not the site of a departed print competitor, rather it is a site chock-full of help and info (Figure 4). Pages include a comprehensive listing of current version numbers and sources (Figure 5), and various support files (Figure 6). News and interesting links are also featured. Site graphics by none other than Eric Schwartz are a nice treat.

### Where To Find Me

**rhays@kiva.net**

**<http://www.kiva.net/~rhays>**

**rhays@amigazone.com**

**R.Hays5 on Genie**

**72764,2066 on CompuServe**

**For U.S.Mail:**

**Rob Hays**

**P.O.Box 194**

**Bloomington, IN 47402**

Please include a SASE if you need a personal reply.

If you run an Amiga specific BBS, send me the information callers will need to access your system. Phone number(s), modem speeds, software settings, etc. As a service to the Amiga community I will include the information I receive in this column from time to time.

If you come across any World Wide Web sites you feel would be of interest to the Amiga community, pass them along for inclusion in the HotList of the Month. Send the info to any of my addresses above.

That's all for now. See you on line!



Figure 5 (Top): Keep up-to-date with current versions.

Figure 6 (Bottom): A great place for support programs.

•AC•



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# ATAPI CDROM on the A1200/A4000

## Part 2

Both AsimCDFS by Asimware Innovations Inc and AtapiPnP (Atapi Plug and Play) by CD++ will get you spinning with CD-ROMs.

by Dave S. Matthews

*NOTE! Adding an IDE/ATAPI CD-ROM to the Amiga line can be something of a hack, and while many people including myself have done so successfully, neither I nor Amazing Computing make any guarantees of workability, nor can we be held responsible for any damage that might occur in the course of installing an IDE CD-ROM.*

*In addition, neither Amazing Computing nor PiM Publications, Inc. either does or does not endorse the vendors listed in this article. The information provided by the author is based on his personal experiences.*

This is an update to my article on using IDE ATAPI CD-ROMs in the December 1996 issue of *Amazing Computing*. Most of the details regarding the actual hardware installation remain unchanged from the previous article, however, the software parts of the article have been seriously overtaken by history.

Oliver Kastl, the author of the ATAPI software I covered in that previous article, seems to have abandoned his ATAPI software. I (and others I have talked to) were unable to contact him or his company at the

addresses I listed. Therefore, since you cannot register this software, it's no longer a valid choice.

While on the subject of bad news, I saw a somewhat discouraging series of posts in the comp.sys.amiga.hardware USENET news group. Some claim that connecting two devices to the Amiga 1200's IDE port without the use of a buffered IDE cable will do the Amiga great harm. Others, including Dr. Peter Kittel, have stated that this is not so. No real conclusion was reached on this issue, and unfortunately, not being a hardware guru, I cannot speak authoritatively one way or the other.

I have used the Mitsumi ATAPI CD-ROM for several months now, using a standard 2.5" <-> 3.5" cable, and have experienced no hardware failures, although as I reported in the earlier article, my 2.5" Conner HD simply will not boot with a second IDE device, whether another hard drive or CD-ROM. I finally received an answer from Conner/Seagate tech support, which confirmed the CP2044PK 2.5" IDE HD will only work in a single drive configuration.

Buffered IDE cables are expensive and hard to find, at least on this side of the pond, but whether this is a good investment, or simply a waste of money is something you will need to decide for yourself.

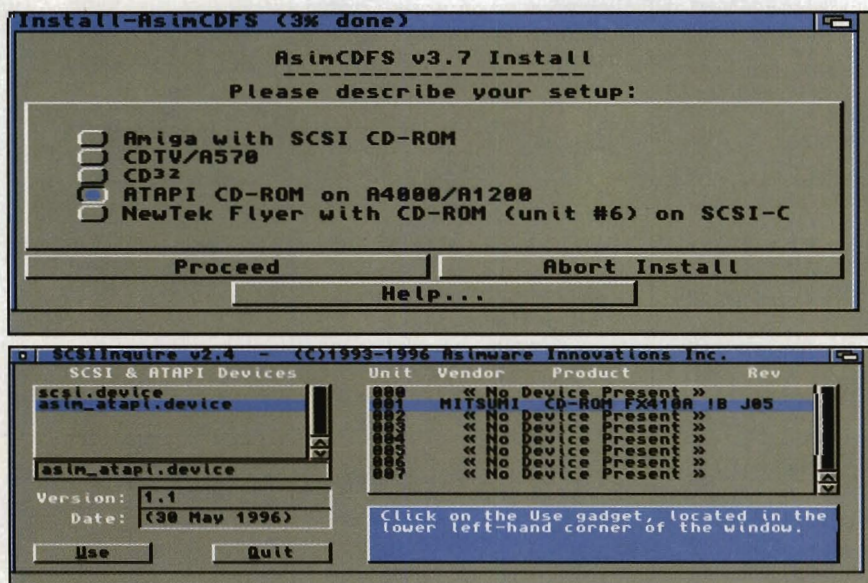


Figure 1 (Top): AsimCDFS installation

Figure 2 (Bottom): AsimCDFS SCSI Inquire



On the other hand, I did receive an email from Tony Philipsson, who informed me he has A1200 2.5" <-> 3.5" (non buffered) cables for sale. An A1200 3.5"HD & CD-ROM IDE CABLE (3ft/1meter) is \$18 plus \$2 shipping and handling. The A1200 PSU 200watt with CD-ROM bay is \$69 plus \$4 shipping and handling. You can contact him at: Tony Philipsson, 1941 NE 51 ST #38, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33308 Email: a036888t@bcfreenet.seflin.lib.fl.us

## Hardware Difficulties

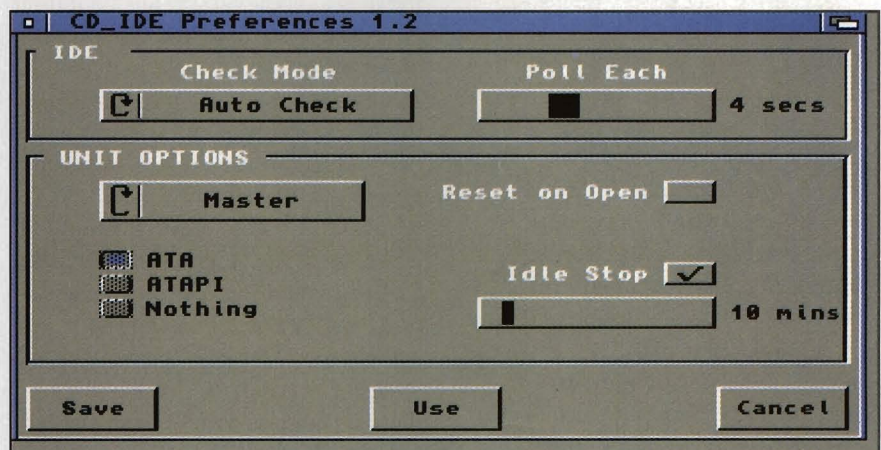
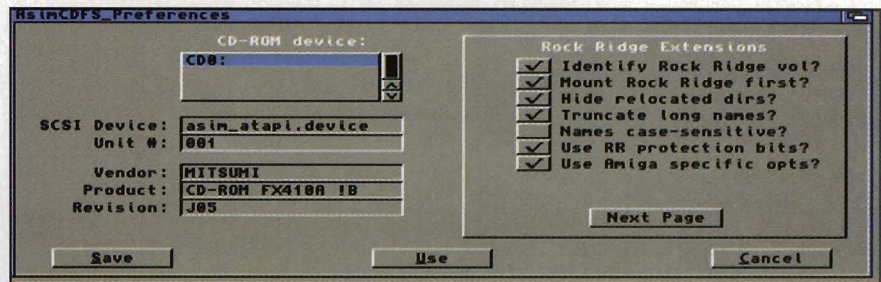
There is a saying in the computer biz- "It's the software that's hard." Well in this case, that is not true. For an A1200 owner seeking to add an ATAPI CD-ROM, the software is the easy part. The good news is, two "new" players have entered the arena, AtapiPnP by CD++, and AsimCDFS by Asimware Innovations, Inc., and both provide all the software you need to set up and use your ATAPI CD-ROM. As before, adding an ATAPI CD-ROM to the A4000 is much less complicated, though I did hear that the Wearnes ATAPI CD-ROM was a bit too long to comfortably fit into the A4000's drive bay.

## AsimCDFS

You can get the AsimCDFS Commercial version for about \$70 street price. It is a product of Asimware Innovations Inc., 600 Upper Wellington Unit D, Hamilton, Ontario Canada L9A 3P9 (Telephone (905) 578-4916. Their web site is HTTP://www.asimware.com, information requests can be emailed to info@asimware.com, and technical support is at support@asimware.com.

Asimware, a commercial developer, is probably familiar to most Amigans, particularly those with an interest in CD-ROM software. The version of AsimCDFS reviewed here (3.7) has full support for ATAPI as well as the more prevalent SCSI CD-ROMs.

AsimCDFS is a very comprehensive CD-ROM package, with support for SCSI and ATAPI drives, and many extras not found in other packages.



CD-ROM Control Software (from Top to Bottom)

Figure 3: AsimCDFS Preferences

Figure 4: AsimTunes Audio CD Player

Figure 5: AtapiPnP CD-IDE Preferences

Figure 6: AtapiPnP And Groovy Audio CD Players



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What you get for your money is a disk with the software, a manual, and as a bonus, the Fishmarket CD-ROM.

The Fishmarket CD-ROM contains disks 260-1000 from the Fred Fish library. For those who have been hiding under a rock, the deservedly famous Fred Fish compiled a huge library of freely distributable software. Installation for AsimCDFS was very easy, though somewhat more user interaction was required than for the AtapiPnP package. During the installation, you select the IDE/ATAPI option, and then the included SCSI inquire program should find and configure your ATAPI CD-ROM drive.

This process was quite painless for my A1200 Mitsumi setup. See Figure 1 and Figure 2 for screenshots of the Installation process.

AsimCDFS supports the standard ISO9660, Rockridge, Mac HFS, PhotoCDs, and CorelCD. The included DiscChanger allows selection of the desired filesystem on hybrid CDs. Like AtapiPnP, AsimCDFS works with the registered version Shapeshifter, as well as PCx and PCTask. On Mac HFS discs, you can access both the Data and Resource forks of the Mac's peculiar file system. See Figure 3 for the AsimPrefs, showing the Rockridge options.

In addition to the CD filesystem and ATAPI device, AsimCDFS has all the usual goodies and more, including ARexx support, an audio disc player, which can play music through the CD-ROM headphone jack or even through the Amiga's audio. You need a pretty hefty Amiga to use the Amiga's Audio, though, as it is very CPU intensive. Also included are utilities for running CDTV and CD32 games, and facilities for browsing PhotoCD discs. When browsing a PhotoCD, AsimCDFS generates color thumbnails of the images. When copying or loading these images, AsimCDFS transparently converts them to IFF24.

One minor limitation is the lack of CD-ROM autoboot for ATAPI drives. According to the readme file, this will be addressed in a future release. Figure

4 shows the included Audio CD player, with the title database open. You can also access the actual Digital Audio data on Audio or Hybrid CDs.

When you insert an Audio Disc, AsimCDFS transparently converts the CDDA information into 5 different Audio formats, including AIFF, on the fly. You can "digitize" music from the CD by simply selecting the desired format and copying it to the HD. You can also use audio digitizer software to grab snippets of the digital audio. Or you can if your CD-ROM supports this. The Mitsumi FX410 does not have the required hardware to accomplish this. Some of the drives known to work with AsimCDFS (most true ATAPI drives will work as well): Acer 2x; Mitsumi FX400; SONY 76E, 77E; Turtle Beach 8x; NEC 4X4; Toshiba 5402, 5602, 5522; Goldstar GCD-R560; Sanyo 254P; Chinon CDS-545; and Pinnacle 10Xtreme.

### ATAPI Plug 'n' Play

Is Shareware at \$35. There is a demo on Aminet under disk/cdrom/ATAPI\_PnP300.lha. It is produced by CD++, Georg Campana, Via Indipendenza, 134, I-57029 Venturina (LI), Italy (Email: [georg@etruscan.li.it](mailto:georg@etruscan.li.it)).

The registered AtapiPnP package consists of a disk containing the ATAPI CD-ROM software, including the ATAPI device and CD filesystem, the Preferences Program, plus a small CD Audio player, CD Audio Track downloader, and CDXL player. CDXL is/was the Amiga CDTV's answer to Apple's Quicktime digital video format. AtapiPnP has a functional CD32 emulation package, which is still being developed. Installation is very straightforward, and proceeded without a hitch on my A1200 Mitsumi 4x ATAPI drive. AtapiPnP supports ISO9660 (this is the standard CD format for Amiga and IBM Clone CD-ROMs). Rockridge and Mac HFS filesystems are also supported. The filesystem is selected automatically.

On hybrid disks, holding the shift key down while inserting the disc will select the alternate filesystem. Note, registered owners of Shapeshifter

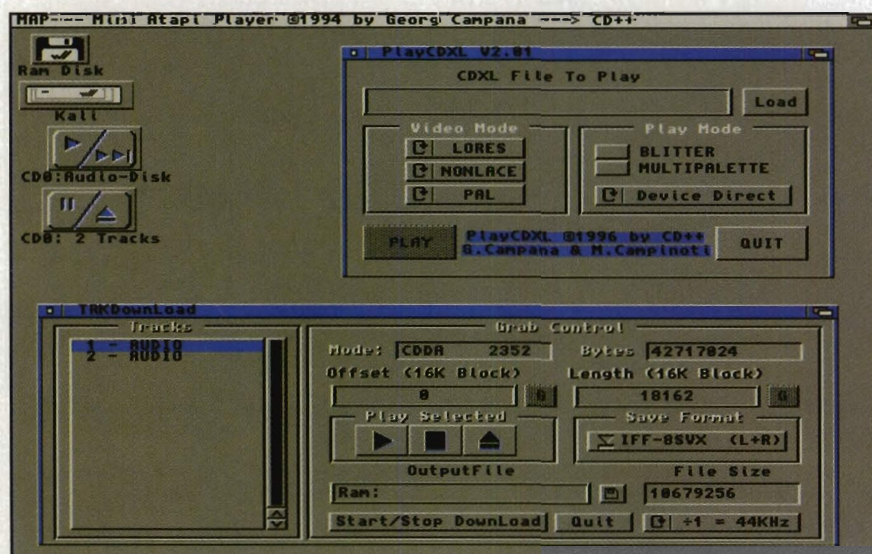


Figure 7: AtapiPnP Track Download and CDXL Player



should be able to access Mac CD-ROMs using AtapiPnP, at least it worked on a very brief demo on my system. PCx and PCTask also appear to work with AtapiPnP. See Figure 5 for the AtapiPnP Prefs program.

The only disappointment I had was with the enclosed Audio track downloader. This software allows you to save a segment of digital sound from an Audio CD. As with AsimCDFS, my Mitsumi simply does not support this. The music player, on the other hand, functioned well, although it does not allow making a database of CD and track titles. Actually, you don't even need the separate player, when an Audio CD is inserted, two icons appear on the workbench, and the CD can be played by clicking on the appropriate icon. See Figure 6 for the AtapiPnP Player, and Figure 7 for the Track Downloader and PlayCDXL programs.

### Alternatives

There are a number of CD audio players on Aminet, either shareware or freeware, which work with both the AtapiPnP and the AsimCDFS software. These allow you to keep a database of your audio CDs. One rather slick program is Groovy Player. This is a full featured player, modeled after a real Technics CD player. See Figure 6 (lower half) for a look at GroovyPlayer. GroovyPlayer.lha is shareware, \$5. GroovyPlayer is at 1039 Hunyadi u. 65. in Budapest, Hungary (Tel/fax: (36 1) 160 8851, Email: alan@elender.hu).

### AtapiPnP Compatible Drives

Some of the drives known to work with AtapiPnP (most true ATAPI drives will work as well): Sony CDU 55E/50E/76E/77E; Mitsumi FX001DE/FX300/FX400/FX410; Reveal (4X); NEC CDR 273; Goldstar GLD-R520B/GLD-R540B; Acer CD 743E; and Matsushita CR-581 J.

### This Just In

Some late breaking new features in the latest AtapiPnP release:

- The device is now ATAPI 2.6

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Circle 143 on Reader Service card.

- compliant (last standard)
- It supports the new CD-Changer like Nec 4x4
- There is a new utility for swapping disks on changers
- Map (Mini Audio Player) completely rewritten

Also in the works from CD++ is support for the new CD-Writer from Mitsumi.

### The Bottom Line

Both packages are worthy products. Both do the job, and do it well. Which you choose depends on your needs, system, and budget. AtapiPnP is your basic transportation, functional and inexpensive. AsimCDFS would be your luxury model, with all the extras. AtapiPnP is less expensive, and uses less memory and disk space, but is less polished, and has fewer extras. Also, AtapiPnP is designed strictly for IDE ATAPI drives, and does not support SCSI.

If you are on a tight budget, AtapiPnP might very well fit your needs nicely. On the other hand, for those of us in North America, buying the registered version of AtapiPnP requires a bit more patience, as the trip across the pond and back can take a while, though I have found CD++ to

be quite responsive. Try the demo on Aminet, which should give you an idea of whether AtapiPnP will work for you.

If you live in North America, you don't mind the extra ram and disk space consumed, and/or you want a more mature CD32 emulator, or you need some of the other extras, then seriously consider AsimCDFS. Although it is considerably bigger than AtapiPnP, and more expensive, it is a more comprehensive package, with CDTV and CD32 emulation, PhotoCD and CorelCD browsing, and other luxuries. AsimCDFS also supports SCSI CD-ROMs, including multi-disc changers, and the writeable Panasonic LF-1000 PD/CD-ROM, but again, that is for another review(er). From my experience, Asimware has excellent customer support, and of course, AsimCDFS can be bought from any Amiga dealer.

I would like to thank Both Georg Campana of CD++, and Richard Giannini of Asimware for their assistance in preparing this review. As always, you can contact me via Amazing Computing or via email:

•AC•





# DEMO TAPE SUCCESS SECRETS!

Whether you are a video producer in need of marketing or just someone who needs to promote their best efforts, Steve Yankee has some valuable insights into what we all need to do.

*By Steve Yankee*

If you don't have a demo tape—or you have got one that is not doing the job—don't feel like the Lone Ranger. A good demo tape is a rare commodity in the video production business, simply because most of us are much like that legendary shoe-maker: many times we are just too busy making shoes for other people to take the time to put shoes on our own (barefoot) children. Well, if you want to run with the big dogs instead of staying on the porch, you have simply GOT to take the time!!! Because a good demo tape, properly planned, produced and distributed can win you a lot of profitable new business.

So what is a demo tape, anyway? Contrary to what you might think, a demo tape is not a random collection of snippets and scenes from video productions you have already shot and sold. Even though we have all cut and pasted and used these types of tapes before, for all intents and purposes it is NOT a real demo tape. Because "Demo" stands for "demonstration." It does NOT stand for "a miscellaneous collection of unrelated scenes."

## **The first mistake: You are moving too fast!**

The first big mistake most producers make is to hurriedly throw

a demo together because a client wants to see it—right now. The second biggest mistake is to grab unrelated or imperfect bits of video footage—bits that don't convey the message you need to relate to your prospect or suitably showcase your production quality—and hope, somehow, that it will suffice. This technique used to work—back in the days when being a video producer was the only qualification you needed to work on a video; but video is no longer a voodoo technology; most everyone owns a VCR, if not a consumer camcorder, and has the basic knowledge of how videos are put together.

Far and away, though, the very biggest mistake you can make when you assemble your demo tape is to center the attention on YOU and not on your client.

## **Your demo MUST be centered around the client!**

Let me elaborate. In the course of my business as a sales consultant to the video industry, I have talked to hundreds of video producers. Many of them wonder why they are not bursting at the seams with profitable jobs. Most of the time I believe it is due to a common fault: too many video producers focus their marketing efforts on themselves, their own talents and equipment, and on what they are selling...and NOT on the prospect and why he or she is buying.

If this is a problem you have run up against, my answer is pretty

straightforward: just like a printed brochure or an ad, or any marketing communications materials you use to attract new business, your demo tape must utilize what I call client-centered marketing to get people to come knocking on your door after seeing it.

Client-centered marketing is very simple. All you really need to understand is that there is a big difference between "features" and "benefits".

"Features" relate to you and your talents, products or services. For example, telling someone "we use an Amiga-based Toaster 4.0 editing system" is a feature.

On the other hand, a "benefit" is a very specific result that your products or services offer to your prospects. It is more important to a client than a feature, and far better for your ultimate success to tell your client that their production is edited flawlessly, in perfect color and with great titles (which is the benefit of using a Toaster system) than it would be to tell them specifically that you use a Toaster editing system—and letting it go at that.

Are you with me so far? Good. Because I want you to make a real point to remember that whether you are making a new demo tape or writing a sales letter or talking on the phone to a new prospect—you must always use BENEFITS to sell to their wants and desires.

And that is the First Commandment of making a dynamite demo tape: focus on the client's benefits of

*Writer/Producer Steve Yankee is the author of over 50 books, tapes and other instructional materials designed to help independent videomakers and producers make more money.*



using you as their video source—not on the features of you, your equipment or your company.

### Video Commandments 2 through 7

Here are the other six commandments you need to follow:

2. Your demo tape must be planned properly. Creating an effective demo tape is not a one-day job—it will take some time to create and execute a video program that will really do the job you want it to do. Your message must reach the audience with which you wish to do business. It does not help to show wedding scenes on a demo tape aimed at corporations—or vice versa. So always keep the needs of your target audiences topmost in your mind.

3. Your demo tape must be produced carefully and exemplify your very best work. No glitches, no bad camera moves, no bad edits. Simply the best you have, presented in a logical sequence.

## Focus on the client's benefits of using you as their video source

4. It should contain testimonials from satisfied customers! You need to gather some benefit-oriented testimonials. These will help defuse any anxieties your prospect might have about spending money with you for a production. At the same time, favorable comments about you and your work will go a long way to enhance your credibility.

5. Your demo tape **MUST** have a strong Call to Action. It must offer something to make the client respond, and respond **NOW!** The tape (or the note or letter that goes along with it) should contain a limited-time discount offer, a coupon good for a dozen free duplicate copies of the finished production, or some other value-added benefit that makes the prospect reach for the phone to call and book you for their next job, and do it right now.

6. Your demo tape must be packaged properly. A handwritten label and a cardboard sleeve just won't cut it in today's competitive marketplace. You need to consider printed labels...plastic library cases with printed inserts...anything and everything that will set your tape apart from your hungry competition.

7. You must get your demo tape in front of the people who you want for your customers! Like any marketing tool, a demo tape is useless unless you get it out there working for you constantly. So who should get it? **ANYONE** that you contact—or who contacts you—who requests more information about your company and your video capabilities! Mail it, deliver it yourself...but get it out there where it can be seen...appreciated...and responded to.

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### Remember the value of good and proper follow-up.

Your demo tape may be the demo tape to end all demo tapes. But you have got to remember that people can be lazy or unwilling to commit to a video project. And while your demo will certainly get their interest, by itself it is usually not enough to get them to call you. So you have got to realize the value of proper follow-up. That includes phone calls, postcards, and even a second or third sales letter if required.

### Get started by writing down your goals.

I suggest that you sit down with a pen and notepad and write out, first of all, your goals for your demo tape. You should be as specific as you can be. Are you looking to increase your sales with this tape by, say, 20 percent? Are you looking to close on half the jobs you get a chance to bid on? Are you

looking to enhance your credibility, have an opportunity to work on those higher-priced productions, get more wedding work, or do you want to accomplish a combination of these goals? Whatever your goals are, write them down and keep them in mind through every step of the creation and production process!

You should also note who will be receiving and watching this demo tape. Who is your main audience? Are you in the wedding video business? Then brides-to-be and their mothers are your primary audience and you should be targeting them with a wedding-specific demo tape.

Are you looking to attract new corporate clients to get new product presentations, safety training productions, videotape live events and sales meetings, produce corporate capabilities videos?

Is your main market churches, schools or educational facilities? Is it legal firms who you want as new clients for your deposition videotaping, your "day in the life" programs, your witness preparation services? Is it other producers who are looking for a quality source of Amiga-generated graphics and animations?

### Focus Your Efforts

Or is it all of the above? I believe it is very hard to produce a demo tape that appeals to the broad audiences that most small video businesses or independent producers work with—but here's a clue. If you are one of the mixed breed—which includes many independent video producers who market to several different audiences: doing weddings on the weekends, videotaping the occasional seminar, doing a deposition once or twice a month—you can get around trying to cover too much ground in your demo by making a sort of general opening video, and then dubbing in a more specific program.

In other words, customize your demo to fit the prospect. If a business is looking for a program on a new product or service, for instance, you can give them a copy of your 'general' demo and then follow it with a dupe of

a new product presentation which typifies your best work.

I would caution you about mixing what I call 'retail' and 'business' productions. If I were a VP of sales for a large company, I would not be too impressed with your wedding video skills and, if I were a groom-to-be, I would not be very interested in seeing how well you lit and shot that mammoth construction crane or a new automatic widgetmaker! You might be better off with two demo tapes: one for the typical consumer, one for the typical corporate dweller.

### Do it Well and Do it Now!

And while we are talking about planning, remember to keep your demo attractive, to-the-point and short! Unless you have a dynamite story line or way-cool visuals, your demo tape should be from three to six minutes in length. Too long and you start to lose your client's attention, risking losing the assignment. Better to get your tape into your prospects hands as painlessly as possible, get them to watch it, quickly get your benefit-oriented message across, and ask for the order—now!

Excerpted from Steve Yankee's  
Master Video Series program

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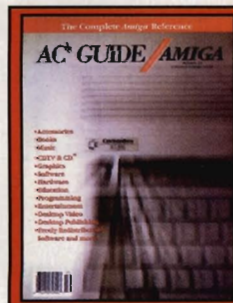
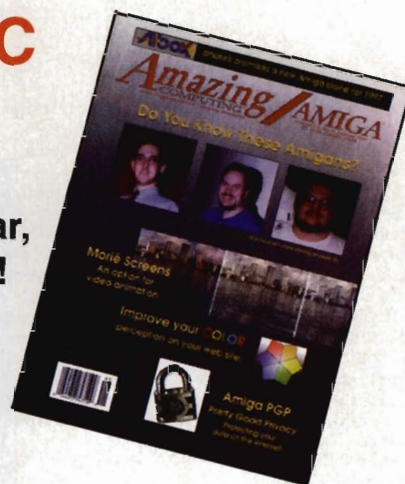
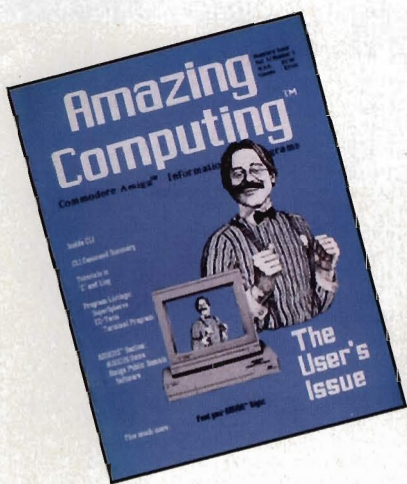
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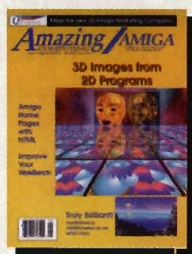
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## VOLUME 11.5; MAY 1996

**New Products & Other neat stuff,** Nova Design acquires Aladdin 4D, SoftTalk Programmer kit available, 'Professional' 3D glasses, and much more.

**DPaint Tiled Backdrops,** Creating 3D space in a 2D environment. Among its specialized features, DPaint has intuitive tools for creating perspective tiles. Learn how to utilize one of the hidden talents of the Amiga's well known paint program, by R. Shamms Mortier.

**A Truly Brilliant Idea!** TrueBrilliance's capacity to address and incorporate ANIMbrushes gives it another plus as a tool for the creation of digital artwork on the Amiga, by R. Shamms Mortier.

**On-Line,** Amiga multitasking advantages and three new Web programs: AmiTCP/IP, IBrowse, and AWeb. Learn how to maximize the best feature of the Amiga while you are working on-line, by Rob Hays.

**This Old Workbench Episode One,** Tired of a lackluster performance from your current Amiga WorkBench? Try the techniques and programs in Dave's new series, by Dave Matthews.

**Web Typesetting Part 2: Basics,** Creating a Home Page with your Amiga requires a little knowledge of the intricacies of HTML, by Randy Finch.

**An Interview with QuikPak's David Ziembecki,** Amiga Technologies has selected a new sales organization for the Amiga in North America. Meet the person chiefly responsible for marketing the Amiga as well as developing future Amiga markets on these shores in this AC Exclusive.

**Web Warning!** The same Home Page can yield decidedly different results. Start creating a Web page with the Amiga that everyone will be able to read.



## VOLUME 11.6; JUNE 1996

**New Products & Other neat stuff,** Amiga Internet Starter Package for Canada, Personal Paint for the Internet, new Sample Wrench Sound Editor, five new CD's from GTI GmbH, and more.

**NAB '96,** The National Association of Broadcasters held their annual event in Las Vegas, but the Amiga is slowly disappearing from the show floor, by Don Hicks.

**Travel Through the Digital Universe,** Learn about people, astronomy, spacecraft, astronomical terms, constellations and stars through this CAL (Computer Assisted Learning) program from SYZYGY Research and Technology, Ltd., by R. Shamms Mortier.

**DPaint Morphing,** Although not as advanced or controllable as the high-priced morphing

programs, DPaint offers Amiga users unique and exciting alternatives in their morphs, by R. Shamms Mortier.

**On-Line,** Use client programs to bypass obstructions and ease your way on the Internet, as two shareware programs, Gui-FTP and WebMaker, are discussed, by Rob Hays.

**This Old Workbench Episode Two,** The Workbench as art: personalize your work area with backdrops, icons, and menus. In this episode is covered the GUI aspects of Workbench renovation, by Dave Matthews.

**VIScorp Buys Amiga Technologies,** VIScorp is purchasing Amiga Technologies and will be working with Amiga interests all over the world. Read what the executives of this Chicago firm have had to say so far to the Amiga community. **Web Typesetting Part 3: More Basics,** Your home page is only a few keystrokes away with these HTML code samples in your documents, by Randy Finch.



## VOLUME 11.7; July 1996

**New Products & Other neat stuff,** GVP has a new home, Amicom introduces a new web installer, Blitz Basic is back, Paxtron has Amiga parts, Shamms Mortier introduces GrafX Tidbits, and more.

**Non-linear Video on a Budget: V-Lab Motion & Movieshop 3.2,** Can't afford the high priced video systems for non-linear editing? The answer may be the V-Lab Motion and its new Movieshop 3.2 software, by John P. Jackman.

**Fun with Lyapunovs,** Create 3D environmental terrain models from the chaotic graphics of Lyapunov space. They are a class of fractal associated algorithms used to visualize a specific condition of fractal space, by R. Shamms Mortier.

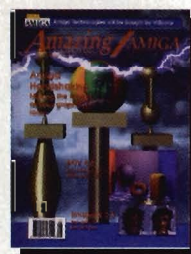
**Amazing Symmetry,** Textured tiles are extremely easy to create and offer the digital artist a few very interesting opportunities. This tool, embedded in DPaint, will help in your obsession to find newer and unique textures, by R. Shamms Mortier.

**On Line,** Travel the internet with the newest Amiga browser, Voyager 1.0, and discover more excellent Amiga web sites, by Rob Hays.

**JAZZ.BIT 96,** Why is a major computer art competition held in Finland? An interview with Martin Keitel, the arts manager of JAZZ.BIT 96, interviewed by Marc R. Hoffman.

**Amiga Wars,** There is a battle for the Amiga user raging on the internet between old and new Amiga firms and a few others. For a system many have tried to write off, the Amiga is attracting a lot of interest.

**Web Typesetting Part 4: Publishing & Tables,** How to get your beautiful Home Page on the Web for the world to see. Also, delve into one of the most popular additions to the HTML 3.0 standard, known as tables which allow data on a Web page to be structured in a row and column format.



## VOLUME 11.8; AUGUST 1996

**New Products & Other neat stuff,** VIScorp reaches Amiga Technologies agreement, Cronus distributes new CDs for Developers and more, Sony Electronics releases DKC-ID1 Digital Camera, World Construction Set Version 2, and more!

**ImageFX 2.6,** The Amiga's premiere graphics manipulation tool has just taken a quantum leap in abilities, reviewed by R. Shamms Mortier.

**An Interview with the Nova Team,** Amazing's Graphics reporter and admitted ImageFX and Aladdin 4D addict discussed Nova's current plans with the Nova team, by R. Shamms Mortier.

**Amiga Handshaking,** The Amiga's IFF standard allows users to utilize the best of several different programs to create a unique image or animation, by R. Shamms Mortier.

**On Line,** There is a mountain of powerful software in the Aminet collection. Protection for your SCSI and IDE hard drives as well as a better CD-ROM OS utility which includes unique audio CD ROM capabilities are just a few, by Rob Hays.

**POV Ray Tracer 3.0 Sneak Peak,** Persistence Of Vision 3.0 is now in beta testing. Discover the new tools and features as well as learn where you can try it out for yourself, by Dave Matthews.

**Amiga Wars Part 2,** Amiga Technologies is sold to VIScorp as pios and phase5 continue to jockey each other for market and negotiating positions.

**Olafson's Guide to Amiga Baseball,** Tired of the nation's pastime passing you by? Peter has composed a list of some of Amiga's times at the plate that you can find from dealers, Amiga swap meets, and maybe in your own library.

**Web Typesetting Part 5: Forms,** Creating forms on your web page is incredibly easy and the information gained can help you build a better page, by Randy Finch.



## VOLUME 11.9; SEPTEMBER 1996

**New Products & Other neat stuff,** New Amiga business software, a new Aminet collection, and the Amiga is seen working at the Olympics!

**The Not At All Complete Graphics CD-ROM Compilation Digest,** There is a world of possibilities in every graphic CD-ROM, by R. Shamms Mortier.

**Cinema4D Animation Tutorial: Part 1,** Although AC will stick to the basics, don't think that Cinema4D is capable of anything less than a professional application. Cinema4D is capable of Keyframe, path, hierarchical, inverse kinematic, and special FX (explosions, melts, and more), by R. Shamms Mortier.



On Line, Frustrated with your attempt to connect to the Web? Try a trip to Miami, by Rob Hays.

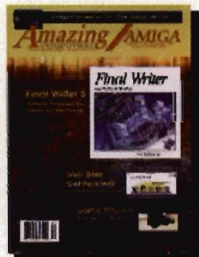
Web Typesetting, Part 6: Reading Form Data, Catching user information from your web site, by Randy Finch.

This Old Workbench, Part 3 Compression on the Amiga, Create needed space on your Amiga on-the-fly, by Dave Matthews.

Make Do With What You Got, In art or in life, it is not always how much you have, but what you do with it, by R. Shamms Mortier.

ESCOM Dies The Amiga Lives! Hear the

behind the scene story from the two main characters, Petro Tyschtschenko of Amiga Technologies and Bill Buck of ViScorp. Gold From 1990? What does this array of equipment from 1990 have to do with current events? The Amiga's influence is continually being felt.



#### VOLUME 11.10; OCTOBER 1996

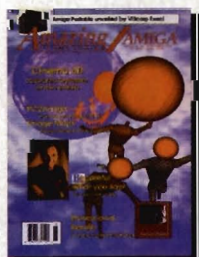
New Products & Other neat stuff, New Game collections, printing solutions, Amiga software repair, backup software, designer software, and more.

The Gothic Church: Part 1 A Tutorial in Aladdin 4D, Tired of the prominence of futuristic themes in 3D design, then take a look at this first part in a series of tutorials explaining the process of modeling in a 3D setting that evokes the past, by Charles F. Cavanaugh. FinalWriter 5, Each release of FinalWriter has added new tools and techniques to its abundant reservoir of options, and release 5 is a very major upgrade that adds a whole list of enhancements, by R. Shamms Mortier.

On Line, Join Team Amiga, fix old games to play again on your upgraded Amiga, find old friends or classmates, and more, by Rob Hays. This Old Workbench, Episode 4: Just when you thought it was safe! Our intrepid adventurer has discovered even more ways to improve (or at least confuse) your WorkBench screen, by Dave Matthews.

Web Typesetting, Part 7: Using Form Data, Getting your data from your web site. Plus, a look at several reader's sites from the web, by Randy Finch.

Amiga Convention '96 Montreal, Canada was home to the Amiga once again as Dealers and Developers met with hundreds of Amiga users. ASIMware has released PhotoCD Manager for the Amiga, See what our resident artist has to say about this and other applications to help Amiga work with Mac & Win resources.



#### Volume 11 Number 11; NOVEMBER 1996

New Products & Other Neat Stuff, SoftLogik announces both PageStream 3.1 and 3.2, Amiga Fest '96 planned for Toronto, Checkbook Amiga, and more.

Cinema 4D: Tutorial #3 Basic Keyframe Editing, Shamms uses some of Cinema 4D's object design and texturing tools to begin a dedicated look at these animation options.

The Gothic Church: Part 2 A Tutorial in Aladdin 4D, In this installment, Mr. Cavanaugh shows the Amiga user how to produce stained glass windows to rival the masters.

Real Chaos and the Computer Artist, Musings on a Muse, In computer art, a pinch of chaos in the recipe is the spice of a creative and worthwhile adventure.

On Line, A quick comparison of some of the Web authoring tools available through shareware.

Web Typesetting, Part 8: Image Maps, Create images that, with a few clicks of a visitor's mouse, make your home page truly interactive.

PC2Amiga: Connect Your Amiga and PC, Finally a way to use those clunky old MS DOS machines. PC2Amiga allows you to mount your PC as an Amiga device.



#### Volume 11 Number 12; DECEMBER 1996

New Products & other Neat Stuff, new Amiga system packages, Portal finds a new home, Amigas now available by on-line sales, and more.

3D Table Building, Without realizing it, you have at your disposal some of the most unique development tools for creating 3D objects imaginable: your word processing and painting software by R Shamms Mortier

The Gothic Church: Part 3 A Tutorial in Aladdin 4D, Mr Cavanaugh explores a set of tools used to create magical special effects. The tools are gas, wave, flare, and fountain systems all fully integrated into the Aladdin workspace by Charles F Cavanaugh.

On Line, More Web authoring tools available on-line, plus the latest news on Portal and more by Rob Hays.

Web Typesetting, Part 9: Frames, Frames are the next big thing on your web site. Also, more reader's sites from the web by Randy Finch. Using an IDE/ATAPI CD ROM with an Amiga 1200 or A4000, Since IDE supports two devices, if you only have a single hard drive, wouldn't it be nice to use the free IDE port a CD-ROM? by Dave Matthews.

This Old Workbench: Episode 5 Renovation from the Ground up!, What would you want to see in a new Amiga Operating System? by Dave Matthews



#### Volume 12 Number 1; JANUARY 1997

New Products & other Neat Stuff, MathScript v3.0, Directory Opus 5.5, amiSpider, and Big ED are all now available. Plus Cronus introduces three new CDs, the Guru-ROM V6 A2091 can improve your GVP SCSI adaptor, and more.

Half-tone Screens for Video Projects, While moire patterns are a problem on the printed page, they can be a boon to the Video Artist by R Shamms Mortier.

Stack'em, Dan-O! Using Layers to Create Outline Effects, Layering or stacking is an easy method to create wider and cleaner outlines by Nick Cook.

Color Use on the Web, A Web designer has a global audience of potentially hundreds of millions of viewers every day. Awareness of the cultural differences in the perception of color is a must by R Shamms Mortier.

On Line, Searching through the World Wide Web can be a lot easier with the right tools by Rob Hays.

Web Typesetting Part 10: Today and Tomorrow, Randy Finch completes his series on Web publishing by looking at the future of the Web and the questions we must ask today.

The Midwest Amiga Exposition, Users from as far away as Texas come together in Columbus for the Amiga by Robert K Sharp.



#### VOLUME 12.2; FEBRUARY 1997

New Products & Other neat stuff, ViScorp announces a change in their bid status, Aurora Works begins Amiga development, and Air Mail for Amiga email is released.

Columns with Personality, Create personality in your art by capturing the personality of your 3D objects with one of the powerful 3D programs available for the Amiga, by R. Shamms Mortier.

PageStream 3.2, PageStream 3.2 and Tune-up 3 is the main DeskTop publishing package on the Amiga. Just what does this new version add to the versatility of the program that is Amiga's answer to this Mac and IBM dominated field.

Roughing the Text, The DeskTop Publishing tutorials continue with Nick's unique approach of applying image filters to text for dramatic results, by Nick Cook.

On Line, Amiga email programs once were difficult to set up and run properly. However, they have matured to the point where they no longer need be feared, by Rob Hays.

Ultimate Amiga Emulator, UAE, Ultimate Amiga Emulator, emulates an Amiga 500's hardware on a variety of platforms, including Unix, Linux, (Power)Mac, DOS, and even the BeBox, by Dave Matthews & Marc Hoffman.

VTU EXPO '96, Universal City was the site of VTU's last exposition. Many new products were announced as well as the return of some old standbys.

AmigaFest '96, Toronto once again played host to a major Amiga outing with dozens of Amiga companies showing new products from around the world. Amiga made the most of their central spot in ComputerFest, one of Canada's largest general computer shows.

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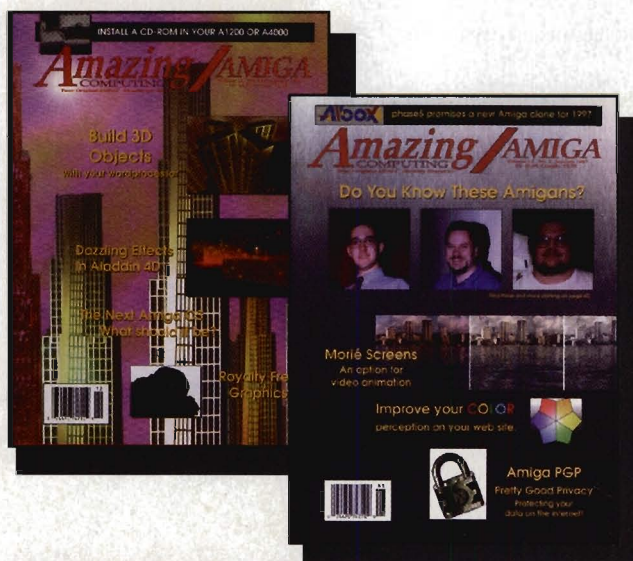
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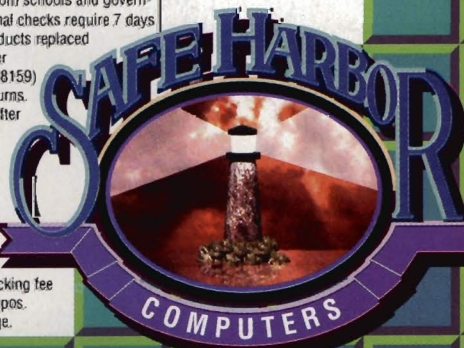
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## STEP RIGHT UP! CREATING STEPPED TYPE

by Nick Cook

The stepped type effect fits in well with this retro-looking cover for some space opera.

Nestled among the Image Club catalog's display of stock photos and typefaces are desktop publishing tips. Since Image Club is owned by Adobe,

it's not surprising that these strategies are geared toward their programs such as "Photoshop." Luckily, Amiga owners still can benefit from these tips.

### Step Lively!

This one creates a stepped type effect. The first thing to do is to enter text and rotate each letter (not the entire word). Alas, Amiga programs do not include a time saving command such as Photoshop's "Rotate Each Letter." Working around this limitation varies, depending on the program used.

### ART EXPRESSION:

**STEP ONE:** Enter the text. In order to avoid jumbling the word when the steps are created, add a space between each letter. Convert the text into graphics.

**STEP TWO:** Press "shift + r" to bring up Art Expression's numerical rotate requester, which allows for precise input for the number of degrees. Working coolly and efficiently, rotate each letter -30 degrees (Figure 1).

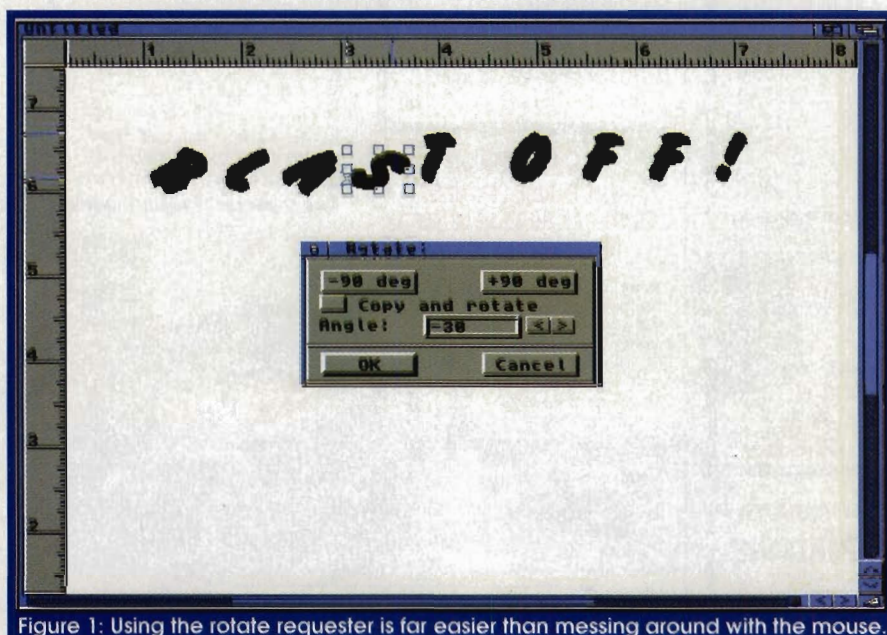


Figure 1: Using the rotate requester is far easier than messing around with the mouse.



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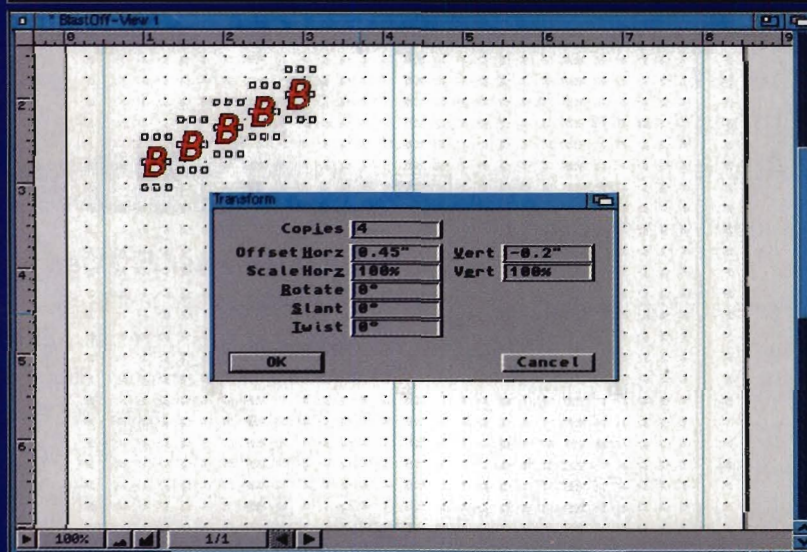
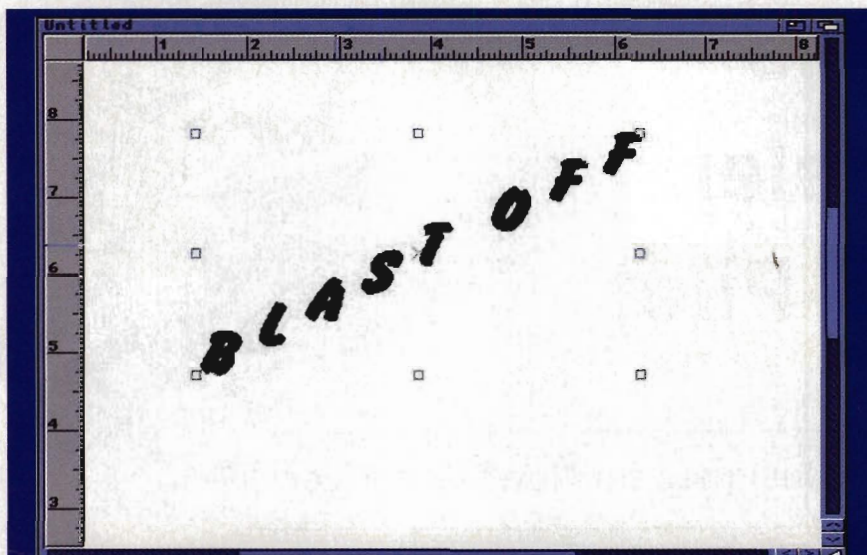


Figure 2 (Top): Rotating text can give the feeling of WOW! ZOWIE! POW! in comic books. Stepped type, on the other hand, seems a little more formal.

Figure 3 (Middle): PageStream's "Transform" function can create many effects for type and objects.

Figure 4 (Bottom): Notice the odd-looking space between the "L" and the "A." You'll probably want to adjust some of the spacing between characters.

**STEP THREE:** Group the letters as one object.

**STEP FOUR:** Rotate the object the inverse of the value used in Step Two. In this example, that would be 30 degrees (Figure 2).

To switch directions, swap the signs. To go "downhill," enter a positive value for STEP THREE, and a negative version of that value for STEP FOUR.

### PAGESTREAM 3:

**STEP ONE:** Create a new page without a text frame. Enter the first letter of the text as you wish it to appear in the final output (e.g., colors, gradient, stroke).

**STEP TWO:** Click on the arrow tool, then click on the letter.

**STEP THREE:** Go into the "Transform" requester, located in the "Object" menu (Figure 3). Enter the number of letters in the word into the "Copies" gadget. In our example, the word is "Blast." The "B" is already present, so enter the number of letters left in the word, four.

Determine the amount of space you want between each character, in this case, 0.45. Enter it in the "Horizontal Offset" gadget. The value entered in the "Vertical Offset" gadget sets how steep the steps are. Our example uses 0.2. If the type is to course upwards, enter the value as a negative (e.g., "-0.2"). A positive value sends the characters "downstairs." You will want to experiment with different settings.

**STEP FOUR:** Hit "OK." With the text tool, erase and replace the duplicated letter with the one you need. You will probably need to adjust spacing manually for the final output (Figure 4).

Our example teaches more than a nifty type trick. Even if the Amiga does not have program X or program Y, we can duplicate many of the functions of those programs with a little ingenuity.



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(continued from page 48)

Lastly (Finally! you say?), a point on the User Interface. Both AmigaDOS and the various programs would do users a favor if they could modularize. I should be able to choose which bells and whistles I want, and which I don't want. I want a word processor that is fast and word-wraps. I don't want WYSIWYG fonts, on-the-fly spellcheck, grammar checking, or DTP page manipulation and graphics. Give me the option to add or subtract from the basic program. If you want tear-off, post-it-note type menus, by all means they should be available to you, but please don't require my system to allocate the extra memory they'd take.

On the subject of a modular OS, perhaps this would be the best way to quickly get a state-of-the-art OS. Suppose Amiga's owner writes (has written) the basic OS, then gives the Amiga programming community freedom to add to the OS any/all programs that meet the requirements of behavior, becoming mostly a keeper-of-the-code to certify that the program behaves properly and therefore is now officially a part of AmigaDOS. This would require the owner to publish official guidelines to writing code and to keep releasing the newest code for developers to emulate/consider. Yet it would allow fast upgrading. When the next Java-type craze hits, Amiga wouldn't need to wait for the next major upgrade to support it, for some shareware/freeware writer could submit his program module(s) and within weeks/days? it could be officially certified. For a small company with limited resources, tapping the shareware/freeware crowd for aid could give a boost to both sides, Amiga getting a good up-to-date OS and the program-

mers getting more exposure and (hopefully) more money.

Releasing a disk, maybe monthly, with the official upgrades in modular form would let us users stay current, adding only those modules we deemed necessary, and the money from the sales could be divided among the programmers whose works are included.

Enough dreams. Thanks for listening.

Yours,  
Ken Partridge  
74074.3325@CompuServe.COM

#### From Gary Goldberg:

One more thing for the new OS, no more drive clicking!

Gary Goldberg  
GaryG@ix.netcom.com

#### From Steve Rifkin:

What a wonderful article you wrote regarding the future of an Amiga O.S. that I would like to see. Other than my desire to see a much higher-end video card than what you proposed, I thought the rest of your thoughts were right on the money.

I also fell in love with your "artist's conception" of how the new hardware tower should look! I'm ready to buy it now. But, lo', if only ViScorp would read your article and act upon it, then my computing needs would be truly satisfied. I do hope they read *Amazing Computing* and get some pointers from you on how the next Amiga OS should be.

Steve Rifkin  
steve@batc.allied.com

#### From Tony Belding:

I saw your article about ideas for a new Amiga OS, and I would like to add some comments from the standpoint of a longtime Amiga user and programmer.

One of the first things you call for is hardware independence. I've no doubt this is desirable and is the way the industry is going, but I do not yet consider it a solved problem. No company has yet produced a redirectable graphics system that is highly flexible and does not compromise performance. Apple has made a good stab at it with Quickdraw 3D, but its track record is yet unproven. Microsoft's Direct3D is in an even earlier stage of development. The only company I know about in the Amiga field working on a similar project is Phase 5 with the CyberGraphX 3D project, but little information has been made public about it.

You write, "There should be support for extending ROMS beyond current size limits..." That is a timid move! We have gone beyond floppy-based systems of limited RAM. In my opinion, the time has come to get rid of the ROM entirely. It no longer serves any useful purpose. The core of the OS should load into RAM from the hard drive upon bootup.

You suggest that the new OS should be able to emulate 1.3 through 3.1 and OCS, ECS and AGA. I think this is asking for trouble. When running an old program, the user has an awful time trying to figure out what combination of OS and chipset (and possibly processor) to emulate for the program to work. You can already see this problem when trying to use older programs with the various "degrader" utilities. It's exactly the kind of frustration that the PC platform is known for, and which Amiga should avoid at all cost. In my opinion, the new system should emulate OS 3.1 and AGA (and 68020 processor, assuming we're no longer on a 680X0-based machine). Any old software that won't work under those conditions should be jettisoned, and good riddance!

It's important to recognize most older software that's going to have compatibility trouble will be in the categories of games or demos, and these will become obsolete the soonest when new hardware is available. Nobody is going to care much about ECS games after seeing what new games can do on a RISC-based computer.

You call for memory protection. The consensus in the industry has come out strongly in favor of memory protection, but there are Amiga programmers who decry it. They say memory protection makes inter-process communication more difficult and is one reason why operating systems like OS/2 and Win95 are so bloated and inefficient. Personally, I'm skeptical of that claim. There may be some impact on OS efficiency, but I can't imagine memory protection causing the OS to consume 16 times as much RAM as it did before.

"The system should be able to gracefully 'defrag' memory..." I think this would be easy to implement if you already have memory protection. Virtual memory is something else that becomes easy after getting memory protection into the system. All of these are built around the assumption of a MMU on board.

"Visual ARexx" is a bad idea, in my opinion. We had something very similar at one time, called CanDo. The scripting language in CanDo was similar to ARexx (just different enough to confuse people, I've always said), and CanDo was a truly



excellent visual authoring system. Unfortunately CanDo is no longer supported. Instead of Visual ARexx or another Amiga-specific system like CanDo, what we really need is an authoring system based on HTML and Java. Then the Amiga suddenly becomes a powerful tool for working with the Internet. I envision a CanDo-like authoring system with HTML as its display and Java as its scripting language. This would bring Amiga right back into the mainstream of the computer industry.

I have some special peeves about Workbench operations which I would like to see corrected. Imagine I have two drawers open on my workbench. Now imagine I drag an icon from one drawer to another: what happens? Well, it depends. If both drawers were on the same device, the icon is moved. If they were on different devices, the icon is copied (i.e., it now appears in both windows). There is no visual clue to tell me which of these outcomes will happen. This definitely needs to be made consistent. The user shouldn't have to keep track of which windows are on which physical devices, nor guess about whether a file is going to be moved or copied.

The handling of filenames as text (rather than icons) needs a lot of improvement. This was added with WB 2.04, but even the old Atari ST of circa 1985 did it better than the Amiga does today with WB 3.1. Directory Opus also shows how the handling of files as text could be much better. I have installed Opus on my system here, and I consider it great. The new OS should take some ideas from it. However, I also recognize that Opus as such is too complex and daunting for beginners.

Tony Belding  
 tlbelding@htcomp.net  
<http://hamilton.htcomp.net/tbelding/>

#### From Allan D Burrows:

I read your article in the December '96 issue of *Amazing Computing*. I wanted to say that I enjoyed the piece, although I believe that a lot of the "all-singing all-dancing" features you proposed were things better handled by third-party software than the operating system. It seems to me that adding all of the things you suggested would:

- a) make the OS too big;
- b) make Workbench too complicated to set up.

I also disagree with the idea of a two-tier OS, the real one for the power users and a cheap one for the peons. (I know, I know, that's not what you ment. What I fear is that it would turn out that way! Besides, it didn't work for OS/2, did it?)

Aside from these little quibbles, though, I think you had some great suggestions and I hope ViScorp takes note of them.

Now, here's something you might not have thought of, but I believe will be key to Amiga's long-term survival. The thing's main advantage over other platforms, and particularly where multimedia and non-linear editing are concerned, is that it works at NTSC/PAL speed. You can hook it up to your TV set or VTR with minimal muss and fuss. In two or three years that will change when HDTV is finally introduced.

HDTV is going to be a digital standard. TV sets will use it, computer monitors, anything else that uses a visual display. This will pretty much eliminate Amiga's big advantage. Right now it can do things that PCs and Macs can't. Once they switch over to HDTV standard, they'll be able to do just as much as an Ami! (Not as well, of course, but Betamax was miles ahead of VHS. It doesn't help.)

On the other hand, it's going to take a while for those platforms to switch over. If ViScorp and AT start planning for the change now, they can steal a march and be the first with HDTV! Think of desktop publishing; it took MS years to catch up with Apple when they were the first and you still can't get far in DTP without using a Mac! Likewise, the TV industry is used to Amigas, particularly where the Toaster is concerned. If we can keep our competitive edge by being the first with HDTV, they'll stay with us, they'll have to. And there's nothing like being the industry standard to keep a computer platform strong!

So, in my humble opinion, ViScorp and AT's first priority should be to fight for the HDTV standard and have Amiga ready to adopt it the day it's legislated. Our computer is around today because it had a BIG jump ahead of all the other platforms with screen colors, with multitasking and with multimedia (before the term was even coined in fact). If we want it to avoid becoming one with the Altair and the Apple II, Amiga has to make another big jump ahead of the competition. I think HDTV is it.

Respectfully,  
 Allan D Burrows  
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•AC•

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(continued from page 12)

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# This Old Workbench: Special Delivery Alternative Views

Dave Matthews has received a great deal of mail concerning his suggestions on the next Amiga OS. Read what these Amiga users want and then write Dave with your own needs.

By Dave Matthews

Art © SoftKey Multimedia Inc 1992

## Late Night Viewer Mail

In the Renovation from the Ground Up article in December Issue of Amazing Computing, I was hoping to stir up some dialog on the next Amiga. And that's just what I did! I'd like to share some "Viewer Mail" I've gotten in response to the "Renovation from the Ground Up" article in the Dec. '96 issue. Note due to the volume and length of these letters, they may be edited for space and/or printed over several issues.

## From Ken Partridge:

In response to your recent article in Amazing Computing concerning the next Amiga OS and hardware, I offer the following thoughts (devoid of answers): Everyone has a different wish list of "must have" items. Most of these are on someone else's "don't need" list. For example, for every voice that says the Amiga will fail if it doesn't do "WinTel" emulation, another voice says having it will do no good, and a third says it will cost sales. The Amigauser forum on CompuServe now and again gets into these arguments, and while I often learn more about the Amiga from them, the question of who is right is unresolvable. We need not a discussion of what the Amiga needs, but one of what an Amiga is. First we need to answer the question of what sets the Amiga apart from Wintels and Macs, not in appearance, but in actuality. It should actually be a short list, for don't they all just manipulate 0s and 1s? What about the basic design of the Amiga makes it preferable over the competition? I can only think of two obvious items:

**The small Operating System.**

**The true multitasking.**

Beyond that, much seems more a case of familiarity over true superiority. For example, I find the Amiga heirarchical file system (is it similar to a Mac's?)

much more sensible than Windows 3.1's weird system of Groups which at first seem identical and are soon found to be very different. Yet would a Wintel user easily accept the right mouse button usage of the Amiga for menus, when he's use to the left button for most everything? Can even an expert on ergonomics tell us which are the better methods? Once we've decided what an Amiga is, giving us the base to build upon, we must ask what a new Amiga must keep from the old Amiga. The dual GUI/Command Line would be an example. Lack of both would not be fatal, yet Amiga users would expect both in any new system.

But the Custom Chip Set may be neither needed functionally nor emotionally to satisfy present users. Again, certain items are necessary to "feel" Amiga, just as certain ones are needed to "be" Amiga. It is at this point that the arguments can begin, for now we ask, What does the Amiga need to be up-to-date or state-of-the-art? I'm no judge of these things, but I'd again caution that "wishes" are not wanted, but rather an appraisal of where we lack and what gets us where we must be. Again an example: Virtual memory is less important, I would think, if your OS takes up little space. Yet if programs or data are expected to be so large as to swamp available RAM, it should be part of the OS. On the marketing side, it may be totally unnecessary to the system, yet users migrating from Wintels may demand it as they would consider how much it was needed on their old computer. This, I think, would be more useful than the "wishlist" of what the next Amiga should be like. We all want a Cray for under \$500, but it won't be built soon. Not that I disagree with your article (well, only here and there), but much of it sounded like AmigaDos 10.x

at the rate of change for most OSs, and we need to get 4.0 out first.

Ok, off this soapbox and onto another, My Wishes:

One of the biggest hangups to change always is the lack of compatibility with old programs. My take on this is, games aside, to run old programs is not as important as using the data generated by them.

If my paint files created under 3.x can be read by 4.x programs, I lose less. True, I may need to buy a new 4.x compatible program, but I need not recreate former work. Especially with desktop publishing programs, or spreadsheets/databases, this is a must. All new/upgraded programs should support the old data from their former versions as well as their competitors' versions.

This is where reading PC/Mac floppies/formats would seem to be a must. If I can seamlessly read my Lotus data into an Amiga spreadsheet and write the changed file back onto a PC diskette, I need not have the capability to run Lotus on my Amiga. A similarly powerful, but different, program will work, and if the Amiga OS makes it more pleasant, the Amiga will be the computer of choice.

It would also seem wise if the Amiga came bundled with at least "lite" versions of most kinds of software: A word processor, a database/spreadsheet, a paint program, etc. Again, it eases the transition if you can do some manipulation of old data, even if the power of the bundled software is well below your old package. If you need not buy that \$500 program immediately to read/write your database files, you will be more likely to buy a new Amiga than hang onto the old Amiga or not switch from a Wintel/Mac.

(continued on page 46)



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